ISLAM
AND THE DISCOVERY OF FREEDOM

by Rose Wilder Lane

with an introduction and commentary

by Imad-ad-Dean Ahmad, Ph.D.

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Minaret of Freedom Institute

Dedicated
to the memory
of Roger MacBride

Resul Mehmedović
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Introduction

The Soviet Union has collapsed. The military-industrial complex is looking for a new enemy. Historical and novel misunderstandings about Islam are being exploited to make the Muslim world into that enemy. The reputedly staid Public Broadcasting System has no qualms carrying overt hate-mongering like Stephen Emerson's "Jihad in America" television special. No less influential a figure than William F. Buckley lent his name to a diatribe that appeared in the *Washington Times* of July 8, 1993 under the title "Unfamiliar Foe Among Us." Mr. Buckley twists a Qur'anic verse which prohibits the use of violence against the innocent to conclude: "This seems to say that there is no need to blow up Manhattan after Manhattanites all pay allegiance to Islam." Thus, the point of the verse is reversed.

There is a great need to draw people's attention to the positive role that Islam has played in the establishment of human rights, especially of individual conscience. I have selected, as the take-off point for such a discussion, a polemical piece by a non-Muslim renowned for her passionate commitment to the cause of individual liberty: Rose Wilder Lane. Mrs. Lane's name has recently resurfaced in the public arena because of the claim that it was she, and not her mother Laura Ingalls Wilder, who was the real author of the famous Little House on the Prairie series of children's books. Mrs. Lane has longer, and less arguably, been reputed as a journalist dedicated to the cause of freedom. It was in that capacity that she wrote a major piece called *The Discovery of Freedom: Man's Struggle Against Authority.* This amazing book, written, according to Mrs. Lane "in a white heat" from beginning to end,

was subsequently withdrawn because of her dissatisfaction with historical errors that distracted attention from her insights. These errors, however, were of no consequence to her thesis. Mrs. Lane's heir, Roger MacBride, once wrote, in another context, that Mrs. Lane "knew that in telling a true story precision of detail matters not" (MacBride 1977).

It is to Mrs. Lane's credit that she was concerned about the historical errors in the book. Yet, the withdrawal of the book meant the unfortunate loss of a polemical tool for the advancement of human rights. I think that the withdrawal of publication was also a loss for the cause of world peace, because, her unfamiliarity with the historical details notwithstanding, Mrs. Lane had a profound historical insight: she devoted a chapter to giving due credit to Islam for its role in the discovery of freedom.

Mrs. Lane put forth the argument that there were three great attempts to establish free societies on earth. The first she credits to the prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). Abraham, she notes, lived in a polytheistic society where everything was believed to be under the control of capricious pagan gods, and human beings were only their playthings. Abraham taught that none of these gods existed. He proclaimed that there is only one God, the Creator and Judge of all: "God is The Right, he said; Rightness creates the universe and judges men's acts" (Lane 1984). Rather than control men, God has blessed them with a free will, and they will bear the consequences of their righteous or evil actions. Mrs. Lane paints history as a struggle between this Abrahamic idea of the individual responsibility of men and the attempts of earthly authority to make itself into a god over men. She calls Abraham's teachings "the first attempt" at a revolution against paganism and authoritarianism and Muhammad's (peace be upon him) teachings as the second. Well aware that Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them both), among

others, taught the same message as Abraham, she gives a special place to the civilization founded by Muhammad. It was the first enduring civilization successfully founded on man's direct responsibility to God and its consequent implications for human freedom and progress. A proud American libertarian, Mrs. Lane identified the American Revolution as the third such attempt, but did not hesitate to acknowledge that it built upon the foundations lain by the other two.

Perhaps Mrs. Lane's insight grew of her travels in the Muslim world. She had good reason to approach that experience with an open mind, untypical of other Western journalists. Rose Wilder Lane may have never been born were it not for the chivalry of the Muslims during the era of the Crusades. Henry Grady Weaver, relating the story of Rose's ancestry, wrote (Weaver 1953):

> One of the returning Crusaders–an Englishman named Wilder, whose life had been chivalrously saved by an Arab foe–decreed that the name of his rescuer should be carried down through each succeeding generation of the Wilder family. Thus it is that Rose Wilder Lane's father bore the name Almanzo–the original was probably [Al Mansur].

A businessman who admired Mrs. Lane's book, Weaver sought to compensate for its withdrawal by obtaining her permission to publish a paraphrase of her book under his own name. It appeared with the title *The Mainspring of Human Progress* (Weaver 1953). In 1984 Laissez-faire Books reissued the original text of *The Discovery of Freedom*, still containing the errors that had caused Mrs. Lane to stop the book's publication. In this era of prophecies of a "conflict of cultures," I perceived value in turning her chapter on Islam and the Discovery of Freedom into the foundation for a separate work by means of detailed annotation. The annotation documents the history behind Mrs. Lane's

argument and demonstrates that Mrs. Lane's errors are inconsequential for her thesis. I have made no changes to her text other than to correct Arabic transliterations (including proper names) and to replace Qur'anic quotations from the inadequate translation of Sale (probably the only one available to her at the time) with those from the incomparably superior work of A. Yusuf Ali (1988).

My objective is to use Mrs. Lane's rhetoric as the take-off point for an accurate historical commentary and pertinent citations from Qur'an and *hadith* (the traditions of the Prophet) in the hope that the result may help to prevent yet another round of crusades between the Muslim and Western worlds. My running commentary is presented in the form of footnotes of the same font as the rhetorical text. It is my hope that this unusual format will reward the reader by offering a blend of the scholarly and the passionate that will be educational and exciting at the same time. I have made no attempt to correct Mrs. Lane's errors in her text, but place all corrections and qualifications in my commentary.

In part this unusual format was necessitated by the terms of my agreement with the late Roger MacBride, Mrs. Lane's heir, who granted me permission to use Mrs. Lane's text in full. I am deeply grateful to the Mr. MacBride for granting me permission to publish this annotated essay and for his interest in the project. I regret that he did not live to see its publication.

Imad-ad-Dean Ahmad, Ph.D.
Bethesda, MD
March, 1997

ISLAM AND THE DISCOVERY OF FREEDOM

ABOUT thirteen hundred years ago a self-made business man began the second attempt to establish the fact of individual freedom in practical affairs.[1] This man is a historical figure, as solid as George Washington.[2]

He was an orphan, of good family, but cheated out of his property inheritance. As a child, barefooted, ragged, hungry, he worked sixteen or eighteen hours a day and slept on bare ground under the sky. He had no schooling whatever, but he had ability and he got ahead. In early middle age he was a highly paid executive, widely known and respected.

He traveled, buying and selling goods throughout the greater part of the civilized world. Babylon was long forgotten, and the Roman empire had ceased to exist. For three hundred years, Constantinople had been the world's center. The thriving modern cities were Baghdad, Damascus, Antioch, Alexandria.

To understand this man, think of a seasoned business executive today, practical, shrewd, humorous, friendly, nobody's

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[1] The first attempt was by the prophet Abraham (peace be upon him; see the introduction).

[2] A reference to the fact that doubts which skeptics cast on the existence of earlier prophets do not apply to Muhammad (peace be upon him) whose historical existence is beyond question.

fool. A man who earns, say $25,000 a year;[3] a sufficient but not spectacular success. Comfortably well off, though not extremely rich, he marries his employer, a business woman of ability,[4] and they retire, to live in Coral Gables, Florida.[5]

He and his wife often served coffee[6] to their friends. The entertainment was conversation. The host's opinions were so radical that for some three years he used prudence in expressing them. But little by little, he expressed them more publicly, and arguments begun in his livingroom spread all over town.

He agreed with Abraham. There is only one God, who does not control men. Each individual is self-controlling and responsible. The pagan gods do not exist.

This idea created terrific excitement, for Muhammad was expressing it in Makkah, the shrine of the most renowned pagan gods. The greatest of these was the strange, heavy, black stone,

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[3] This refers to 1943 dollars, of course. $150,000 would be more like it today (in 1997).

[4] Khadijah was impressed by reports of Muhammad's honesty as well his commercial success on her behalf. She proposed marriage to him. He accepted although it is reported that she was fifteen years his senior.

[5] Muhammad didn't actually move at that time. He remained in Makkah (Makkah) with Khadijah until after her death. The purpose of the analogy between Makkah and Florida is elucidated in the third paragraph following.

[6] The reference to serving coffee is a figure of speech here. Mrs. Lane seems to be aware that coffee was invented later, a product of Islamic Civilization (see pp. 43 and 45).

known to have descended from the sky.[7] Pilgrims came from all over the world to worship it, and the most famous poets displayed their poems in the Ka`ba' that sheltered it. Makkah lived on pilgrims, as Miami lives on tourists. The Makkans were not merely enraged by Muhammad's blasphemy; it hit them where they lived.

He went right on saying what he thought. There is no superior kind of man; men are humanly equal.[8] The Emperor has

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[7] The stone in question may have been worshipped by some of the pre-Islamic Makkans, but by no means was it the major divinity implied here. The stone remains in the Ka`ba' to this day, valued as a momento of the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) who first placed it in the Ka`ba' as sign of God, and not as an idol. The common practice of pilgrims to Makkah of kissing the stone is not in any way a suggestion of divinity in the stone, as some Westerners have gratuitously inferred. It is reported that Caliph Umar said, when he kissed the stone, "I know you are a stone and can neither benefit anyone nor harm anyone. Had I not seen Allah's Apostle kissing you, I would not have kissed you" (Bukhari, 1976).

[8] "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has knowledge and is well acquainted with all things" (Qur'an 49:13).

In his farewell pilgrimage, Muhammad put it plainly: "An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab over an Arab; neither does a white man posses any superiority over a black man

no actual power over anyone. In Muhammad's observation and belief, a priest is no holier or more powerful than any other man, either.

The priests called down their most blasting curses upon him. These had no effect.

Muhammad said that some men are prophets.[9] The greatest, he said, are Abraham, Moses, and Christ. "It is not befitting to (the majesty of) God that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him!"[10] God is the Creator, constantly creative. "When He determines a matter, He only says to it, 'Be,'–and it is."[11]

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nor a black man over a white one, except by virtue of piety." (From *Sahih Muslim* as quoted by Hussein 1990).

[9] The Qur'an explicitly identifies twenty-five prophets (including many familiar to Westerners from the Bible) by name and indicates that there are countless others by asserting that God has sent a prophet to every people. For example: "Say: 'We believe in God, and in that which has been bestowed from on high upon us, and that which has been bestowed upon Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and their descendants, and that which has been vouchsafed by their Sustainer unto Moses and Jesus and all the [other] prophets: we make no distinction between any of them. And unto him do we surrender ourselves'" (Qur'an 3:84). Because the revelation to Muhammad remains indisputably intact, he, "the seal of the prophets" (33:40), is Messenger to all subsequent generations.

[10] Qur'an 19:35.

[11] *Ibid.*

His view was that the priests corrupted Abraham's teaching when they assumed authority to rule the Jews.[12] Christ attacked the priests, and reasserted the truth.[13] But the Catholic and Greek priests now corrupted Christ's teaching, by claiming authority to control Christians.[14]

This showed, he said, that organization is evil.[15] There should be no priests.[16] Each individual must recognize his direct relation to God, his self-controlling, personal responsibility.[17]

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[12] "It was We who revealed the Law (to Moses): therein was guidance and light. By its standard have been judged the Jews, by the Prophets who bowed (as in Islam) to God's will , by the rabbis and the doctors of Law: For to them was entrusted the protection of God's book, and they were witnesses thereto: Therefore fear not men, but fear Me, and sell not my signs for a miserable price" (Qur'an 5:47).

[13] "And in their footsteps We sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Law that had come before him: We sent him the Gospel: therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the Law that had come before him: a guidance and an admonition to those who fear God" (Qur'an 5:49).

[14] "They have taken their priests and anchorites to be their lords in derogation of God and (they take as their Lord) Christ the son of Mary; yet they were commanded to worship but One God: There is no god but He: Far is He from having the partners (which they associate with Him)" (Qur'an 9:31).

[15] The Prophet was prohibiting intermediaries between the individual and God. The prohibition of a hierarchical Church is certainly not a prohibition against organization *per se*. Nor does it

Increasing numbers did. The priests themselves had made Makkah a sanctuary; no blood could be shed there. They could only make life so miserable for these heretics that they left

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necessarily eliminate all concept of authority, since the Qur'an endorses a command structure for arbitration: "O ye who believe! Obey God, and obey the Apostle, and those charged in authority among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to God and his Apostle, if you do believe in God and the Last Day" Qur'an 4:59. As explained in the next note, however, such authority differs from the priestly kind in that it is based on knowledge and aptitude, not on ordination by a corporate Church.

[16] On the absence of a priesthood in Islam, Glassé (1988, p. 318) observes: "[T]here is no ritual in Islam which may not be performed by any believer of sound mind .... most public functions such as Imâm, *qâdî* ('Judge'), *`âlim* (a doctor of religious science) are based upon knowledge and scholarship (one might say skill), but do not require a consecration that sets the performer of the function apart form other believers. This is consistent with Islam's claim to restore the religion of Abraham, or the 'primordial religion'; it could be said that Islam needs no priests because every Muslim is a priest."

[17] "It was We who revealed the Law (to Moses): therein was guidance and light. By its standard have been judged the Jews, by the Prophets who bowed (as in Islam) to God's will, by the rabbis and the doctors of Law: For to them was entrusted the protection of God's Book, and they were witnesses thereto: Therefore fear not men, but fear Me, and sell not my signs for a miserable price..." (Qur'an 5:47).

Makkah.[18] Muhammad's ideas spread far and wide. Men came to Makkah only to hear him. Madinah, two hundred miles away, asked him to come and be its amir.[19]

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[18] The ban on bloodshed only applied within the precincts of the Ka`ba''. Thus some slaves and poor people without protectors were tortured and killed by the pagan Makkans. Muhammad advised them to seek refuge in Christian Abyssinia. The pagan Quraysh had a formal alliance with the King of Abyssinia and demanded extradition. The Muslims pled for refuge on the grounds that they were religiously persecuted for worshipping the same God as the king worshipped. After questioning them the king denied extradition. The Quraysh ambassador appealed, objecting that the Muslims did not worship Jesus as the king did, and the king reopened his interrogation. Speaking for the Muslims, Ja`far ibn Abu Talib explained: "Our judgement of Jesus is exactly the same as that which was revealed to our Prophet; namely that Jesus is the servant of God, His Prophet, His spirit, His command given to Mary, the innocent virgin" (Haykal, 1976, p. 100). Drawing a line on the floor with his cane, the king said, "Between your religion and ours there is really no more difference than this line" (*Ibid.*) He affirmed his denial of extradition, and invited the Muslims to remain in Abyssinia as long as they pleased.

[19] At the time in question Madinah (Madinah) was called Yathrib. It was occupied by two feuding pagan Arab tribes and also three Jewish tribes. The universal religion that Muhammad taught provided the Arabs the opportunity to become monotheists like their Jewish neighbors, despite their Arab blood, and offered hope of uniting the feuding tribes in a religious brotherhood that put conviction above tribe or race.

Muhammad prudently kept this offer in reserve. He went on talking in Makkah. "They say: 'Become Jews Or Christians if ye would be guided (To salvation).' Say thou: 'Nay! (I would rather) the Religion Of Abraham the True, And he joined not gods with God.'"[20]

Surely, the gods themselves could not bear this. Makkah's most respectable citizens, one man from each family incurring an equal guilt, drew their knives to shed Muhammad's blood in holy sanctuary. They stormed Muhammad's house. He had just left, in no confusion.

He made tracks for the south. Hot on the trail came the Makkans. Leaving no tracks, Muhammad was traveling northward to Madinah.

A small town in palm groves, Madinah lived mostly on the date-harvest and a few flocks of sheep and goats. The pilgrim road passed by it. Muhammad's arrival made a great difference. He and his Makkan companions waylaid a rich caravan belonging to his would-be murderers, and brought in immense spoils.[21]

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[20] Qur'an 2:135.

[21] The attempted assassination of the Prophet was, of course, not the only motive for hostility against the Makkans. Most of the Muslim community had already fled to Madinah (then known as Yathrib) in advance of the Prophet. The property they left behind had been plundered by the Quraysh. Yet, despite the obvious motives for raiding the Quraysh caravans, no raids were conducted until a year later, after allies of the Quraish raided the Madinan camels and cattle. Even earlier reconnaissance missions did not begin until six months after the flight to Madinah. The mistaking of these earlier expeditions as raids by historians has

Increasing numbers of pilgrims stopped in Madinah, and Muhammad converted them to the belief that there is one God, and no gods in the Ka`ba' at Makkah.

Makkah's income was cut at its root; the town crashed into the worst depression in its history. The Makkans saw that they could not live in the same world with Muhammad's ideology. Industriously they prepared for war, and set out to destroy Madinah.

A terrifying rumor of their approach sped before them. Mounted, and well armed, spearsmen, swordsmen, and archers, they far outnumbered the total population of the little town.[22]

Quietly, before dawn, they approached it. Madinah slept peacefully in the palm groves. Screeching a war-cry, the Makkans

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been refuted by Haykal (1976) who notes that in every case the number of fighters defending the caravans was many times that of the Muslim forces. Further, the Muslims fired only a single arrow on their supposed victims. Haykal concludes that the expeditions were intended to assert Muslim resolve rather than to precipitate an engagement.

[22] The battle described here was actually the Makkan's third attack on the Muslims. The first, the Battle of Badr, was won by the Muslims despite the fact that the Quraysh forces outnumbered them three-to-one. The second, the Battle of Uhud, was almost won by the again outnumbered Muslims. As the battle neared its end, however, a group of archers defending from high ground, believing the matter was settled, defied orders and rushed to the field in hopes of gathering spoils. The Quraysh capitalized on the hole in the Muslim flanks to seize a draw–killing many Muslims in the process.

charged furiously into volleys of arrows that disrupted the charge. The survivors pulled out of the welter of fallen horses and men. There was not a sound nor stir in Madinah; not a defender to be seen. Nothing like this had ever been known before.

Muhammad had invented trench warfare.[23] He had placed the men of Madinah in trenches, curved around the town. To charge into a trench was suicide. To leap it was to be surrounded. Volleys of arrows were futile, they sped only to earth.

The Makkans drew off and consulted. They kept on consulting. They galloped furiously back and forth before the trenches, yelling insults, daring the men of Madinah to come out and fight like men. No one did.

This went on for days. Madinah had ample provisions. The Makkans ate all theirs. Finally, unable to think of anything else to do, they turned back toward Makkah, two hundred miles away. News of their unfought war doubtless reached there before them.[24]

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[23]Muhammad did not invent trench warfare, he only introduced it into Arabia. This error of Mrs. Lane's–which one wag referred to as a "howler"–in no way undermines the thrust of her argument. On the contrary, the full story demonstrates both Islam's openness to new ideas and its universality. The Prophet consulted all his advisors as to how to best defend Madinah, and adopted the suggestion of a trench from the Persian Salman al-Farsi. He did not reject the idea, neither on the grounds of its novelty in Arabian warfare, nor the foreign origin of its proponent.

[24] The situation was, naturally, more complicated than this. The massive alliance of various pagan Arab and Jewish tribes arrayed against the Muslims was highly unstable, and their suspicions of

Certainly it traveled as fast as camels, to all the bazaars of India, Persia, Arabia, Byzantium, Palestine, all northern Africa and every oasis in the Sahara. It is the kind of news that no one forgets to tell.

Historians have never been able to explain the terrific force of Muhammad's simple statement. Hilaire Belloc says with loathing that it "arose out of nothing, out of the hot sands to the East, and spread like a fire." Carlyle marvels, "As if a spark had fallen, one spark on what seemed a world of black unnoticeable sand; but lo! the sand proves explosive powder, blazes high from Delhi to Granada!"[25]

The knowledge that men are free swept across the known world as swiftly as Americans swept across this continent.

Muhammad remained six more years in Madinah. Then he traveled to Makkah as a peaceful pilgrim–leading thirty thousand good fighting men, well armed. A deputation met him outside Makkah and welcomed him to the holy city, a sanctuary. The Makkans accepted his religious views and made no objection when he removed the idols from the Ka`ba'.[26]

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each other played a significant role in the fact that the battle was aborted, as did the weather conditions. Nonetheless, the decision to build the trench was a decisive factor.

[25] Carlyle (1897), p. 93.

[26] Mrs. Lane has blended two different events. In the sixth year after the flight to Madinah, Muhammad did indeed lead a massive delegation of pilgrims in perhaps the world's first example of mass peaceful resistance. They were not allowed to complete the pilgrimage at that time, however. Nonetheless, the Quraysh were aware of how bad for business it would be for them to attack

"Let there be no compulsion in religion," he said.[27] "Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; God loves not transgressors."[28]

Two years later, he died.[29] He had fought, and won, two battles.[30] All the tribes of Arabia from the Red Sea to the

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unarmed pilgrims. Unable to provoke the Muslims to violence, they avoided an embarrassing confrontation by agreeing to a peace treaty that included admitting the pilgrims at a future date. It was not until allies of the Quraysh violated treaty two years later that the Muslims would return armed, this time to take the city without bloodshed.

[27] Qur'an 2:256.

[28] Qur'an 2:190.

[29] Muhammad died on in 632 C.E. in the arms of his wife 'Aishah. His followers were incredulous of the reports of the Prophet's death. They were at risk of believing rumors that might have led to the deification of their late teacher and leader. Muhammad's close friend Abu Bakr put a quick end to the rumors by warning the assembled masses: "O Men, if you have been worshipping Muhammad, then know that Muhammad is dead. But if you have been worshipping God, then know that God is living and never dies" (Haykal, 1976, p. 506).

[30] There were more than two military battles. Lane might be referring to the two major battles that she has discussed, at Badr and the Battle of the Trench. A more accurate, though doubtlessly unintended, significance for her comment is that he won not only the military battle against hostile belligerents, but also the spiritual battle against ignorance and superstition.

Euphrates declared that men are free, that there is but one God, and that Muhammad was one of the prophets.

In eighty years, the world was Muslim from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic. The Mediterranean was a Muslim lake and the western gate of the known world had a new Arabic name: Gibraltar.[31]

Then came the first great creative effort of human energy. It created the first scientific civilization.[32]

American schools teach American children the European past. Pagan Greece and pagan Rome; the transformation of the Empire to The Church during the Dark Ages; the Renaissance, the Middle Ages, the Kings and the barons, the Reformation, modern Europe, the rise of the capitalist class, the revolt of the masses: that is Europe.

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[31] "Gibralter" is a contorted contraction for *jabal Ṭâriq* (Mt. Tariq), named for Tariq ibn Ziyad, who landed at Gibralter in response to the call for aid by the Spaniards for liberation of Spain from the rule of King Roderick. Roderick had been persecuting Jews, Catholics, and even those of his fellow Visagoths who did not acquiesce to his deposition of the previous rulers.

[32] There were "scientific civilizations" before, as Mrs. Lane notes further on (page 16). The Islamic civilization was the first to be scientific in the modern sense: basing scientific knowledge on induction. Induction, what we think of as "the scientific method," is a balance of observation, experiment, and theory. For a discussion of the development of modern inductive science in the Islamic era and the Qur'anic teachings that propelled that development see Ahmad (1992).

During the stagnation of Europe that is called the Dark Ages, the world was actually bright with an energetic, brilliant civilization, more akin to American civilization and more fruitful today for everyone alive, than any other in the past.

Millions upon millions of human beings, thirty generations, believing that all men are equal and free, created that civilization and kept on creating it for eight hundred years.

To them the world owes modern science–mathematics, astronomy, navigation, modern medicine and surgery, scientific agriculture.[33]

To them the world directly owes the discovery and the exploration of America.

These men were of all races and colors and classes and all former cultures and many religions; by no means all of them were Muslims.[34] They were former subjects or descendants of subjects

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[33] *Ibid.*

[34] The classical Islamic society was pluralistic. The Prophet set the pattern for this pluralism himself in the compact for the governance of the Madinan city-state. In this remarkable document the Jewish and Muslim communities of Madinah federated into a single city-state with Muhammad as its head of state. All citizens would be guaranteed their human rights, but they would be free to follow their respective religions, even to the point of being governed by their own laws in intra-community disputes. Although this society differed from modern American pluralism in that the latter is secular while the former was religious, there are some remarkable parallels. In Spain under the Muslims the Jews and Christians prospered as Jews and Muslims prosper in America despite their minority status.

of all former empires. There is no one name that applies to them all. Europeans called them Saracens.[35]

Their own records of the eight hundred years of their civilization,[36] its institutions, and the causes of its collapse, are largely locked in the Arabic language. Since American scholars

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[35] Mrs. Lane used this word despite the negative connotations Europeans had attached to it, because she was at a loss to find another that would describe all the peoples of the Islamic civilization despite their various creeds. Most, but not all, were religiously, as well as culturally, Muslim. Because of their cultural identification with Islam, some modern writers prefer to call them all "Muslims" regardless of creed. This is like calling modern Western scholars "secular" regardless of their piety or religious affiliation. Other scholars call them "Arabs," even though most were not Arab at all, because Arabic was the scholarly language in universal use. This is like calling modern natural scientists "English," despite their nationality. I accept Mrs. Lane's use of the word "Saracens" with reservations. If Medieval propagandists gave it a negative connotation, we must bear in mind that modern propagandists are giving the words "Muslim" and "Arab" negative connotations as well.

[36] Actually, 860 years. Islamic civilization was founded with the establishment of the Islamic city-state of Madinah in 622. Its era of glory can reasonably be said to have ended in 1492, with the expulsion of the Muslims from Spain. Of course the civilization continued in a depressed state (but with pockets of grandeur afterwards). In this century there is a resurgence of Islam. A renewed commitment to the principles which Mrs. Lane identifies as predominating Islam's earlier days of glory could mark the beginning of an Islamic renaissance.

and intellectuals in general are European-minded, an American can get only glimpses of the Saracens' world, seen through European indifference or hatred.

What makes the difference between living now, and living fifty years ago? You think of electricity, telephones, cars, radio, plastics, and you answer, "Science."

Yet twenty-two hundred years ago, there were scientists. Before Rome was an outlaw's camp in the far west, Aristotle was saying, "If a man grasps truths that can not be other than they are, in the way in which he grasps the definitions through which demonstrations take place, he will not have opinion, but knowledge."

A great scientific civilization flourished in Greece before historical time. You can see its ruins now on Crete and on the mainland. No one knows even the name of the people who created it. Their houses had central heating and modern plumbing; the women wore modern clothes. There is an interesting legend of the man who made wings, flew from Crete toward Sicily, and fell in the sea. These people had no weapons of war. The ruins show that armed men suddenly attacked and burned their cities, and, as the saying goes, wiped out their civilization.

When, for any reason, men stop creating a civilization, many of them go on living and bringing up their children. The Cretans today are not Greeks. (Just try to call a Cretan, a Greek.) The Albanians are not Greeks. The Macedonians were never Greeks. No European scholar knows Aristotle's ancestry, but certainly his point of view is not Greek. (The illiterate Albanian mountaineers say that he was Albanian, and give you his ancestry for a dozen generations; whatever that is worth.)

His father was court physician to Amyntas the Second, King of Macedon. Aristotle went to the best university, Plato's Academy in Athens. He had no use for Plato. He tutored young Alexander the Great and tried to teach him some sense. When Alexander set out to conquer the world, Aristotle left him and founded a school of science. It flourished until Alexander's successor suppressed it. Aristotle quietly went on with scientific research.

No known century has ever lacked scientists. Whenever Authority was weak, men opened schools of science. Then a more efficient ruler suppressed them. The Emperor did this again in the 6th century, and textbooks tell you that "Science expired in Greece." Later you learn that Science, nine hundred years dead, "revived" or "was awakened" in Italy.

All such phrases, of course, are nonsense far inferior to such good nonsense as "Twas brillig, and the slithy toves did gyre and gimble in the wabe."

What happened was that, a little while before Muhammad retired from business, the police closed all schools of science in the Byzantine Empire. A scientist could shut up, or he could sit in a dungeon, or he could get out of the Empire (if he could).

Naturally, a great many got out. In the west, Rome was a ghost town and gangsters roamed over Europe. The north was barbarian. In the east, Persia at the moment was comparatively liberal. The scientists went to Persia.

In its turn, the Byzantine Empire's energy was failing under good strong Government. The Persians swept across Asia Minor again, and this time they heard Muhammad's declaration that individuals are free. The men who believed this could not be suppressed.

Within a century, the Muslim world included India, Persia, Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and all northern Africa to the Atlantic, Gibraltar, Spain, the Balearic islands, southern France and southern Italy and the Italian islands. It encircled the Persian Gulf, the Caspian Sea, and the Mediterranean. Not a frontier separated all the people in that enormous area.[37]

These people were children of men who had lived in all the former empires; they had the same racial heritages, the same cultures, languages, customs. But now they no longer believed in pagan gods. They knew they were free.

The first thing that men naturally want to do is to attack the material world. To live, they must attack it. The natural aim of human energy is to make this earth habitable for human beings. When no false belief obstructs human energy at its source in the individual, men attack this earth to adapt it to human needs and desires. Then they need scientific knowledge, which is knowledge of the material world.

The refugee scientists in Persia were popular now– respected, admired, listened to. No Authority suppressed them; no police kicked them around. They opened their schools; from Baghdad to Granada, their schools were crowded with students. In two centuries, they were great universities, the world's first universities.

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[37] A traveler could pass from one end of the Muslim world to the other without a passport or a visa.

For hundreds of years, these universities grew.[38] The University in Cairo[39] was more than a thousand years old and still had forty thousand students, when I was there.

These universities had no organization whatever.[40] (Muhammad said that organization corrupts knowledge.)[41] A Saracen university had no program, no curriculum, no departments, no rules, no examinations; it gave no degrees nor diplomas. It was simply an institution of learning. Not of teaching, but of learning. A man, young or old, went to a

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[38] See Makdisi (1981) for a detailed discussion of the rise of Islamic universities.

[39] This is al Azhar which started as a mosque (and remains the chief mosque in Cairo). Hodgson (1974, p. 25) describes it as "above all a centre of study, endowed for this purpose by several Fâṭimid caliphs.... It had a library, and stipends for teachers and students."

[40] The earliest Muslim universities were literal "marketplaces of knowledge" which grew up around the mosques. Like the bazaars, which were places merchants came to trade goods, the mosques attracted teachers. Because Islam makes no distinction between sacred and profane knowledge (all truth comes from God) the place where one would teach Qur'an and the traditions was an appropriate place to teach grammar and astronomy.

[41] This is an overstatement. It is true that the Prophet is reputed to have said that the ink of the scholar is more sacred than the blood of the martyr. The implicit defense of academic freedom is obvious. I do not know of any blanket rejection of organization, however.

university to learn what he wanted to know, just as an American goes to a grocery to get the food he wants.

Men who knew (or thought they knew) something, and wanted to teach it, opened a school to sell their knowledge. Success depended upon the demand for the knowledge they had. If they prospered, other teachers joined them. So the schools became universities, and century after century public spirited men added buildings, just as individuals and groups of alumnae add to American universities.[42]

The teachers lectured in open classrooms. Anyone was welcome to listen. An incoming student wandered about, listening. When he decided upon the teacher he wanted, they discussed privately whatever he wanted to learn and needed to study, and agreed upon fees. Then he joined the class regularly. If he was not satisfied, he could quit at any time and find another teacher. When he had learned what he wanted to know, he left the

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[42] The Muslim equivalents of the Western "private foundations" were the *waqf* institutions. Donors would write the charters of the institutions they set up and appoint the directors. Their motive went beyond mere beneficence. It was reported that the Prophet had identified only three ways that a man could continue to accrue credit in his divine record book after his death: to institute ongoing charity, to leave behind beneficial knowledge, or to raise a pious child who would pray for him after he died (Muslim 1976, 3:867). The *waqf* foundations thus benefited the donor as well as the society. These institutions played an even greater role in social development that even Mrs. Lane's writings indicate. Beyond schools and hospitals, even roads and irrigation networks were built and maintained in this manner.

university to use his knowledge. (No doubt his teachers would give him letters of introduction, if he wanted them.)[43]

A thousand years after the Saracens built these universities, far away in time and on a continent that they never knew existed, a revolutionary leader, Thomas Jefferson–who knew little or nothing about the Saracens–realized the dream of his life when he created the University of Virginia. His dream was a new kind of education.

Proudly, almost bragging a little, he wrote to a friend in the medieval-university system of Harvard, "We shall allow them [the students] uncontrolled choice in the lectures they shall choose to attend. Our institution will proceed on the principle . . . of letting everyone come and listen to whatever he thinks may improve the condition of his mind."

For more than nine hundred years the University of Cairo[44] proceeded on precisely that principle. Until the end of the 18th century, Europeans were not able to impose upon that university any tinge of the European belief that minds acquire knowledge, not by actively seeking to know, but by passively being taught whatever Authority decides that they should know.

In these universities, teachers offered all the learning of the past, translated into Arabic. The students in general did not

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[43] Teachers would give students a certification called *ijâzah* (from the Arabic root word meaning "to pass") informing the reader that the student had mastered the subject learned from the teacher well enough to teach others.

[44] Mrs. Lane means the aforementioned al Azhar university *in* Cairo (see note 39). There is also a University of Cairo, but that is a different institution.

want metaphysics[45]; they wanted science.[46] They wanted Aristotle and Galen and Euclid and every scrap of knowledge that had been added to theirs.[47]

The Greeks and the Romans had seen in India the Hindu symbols of numbers. But Europeans were still using the clumsy Roman numerals that do not permit arithmetic, and they were still adding, subtracting and multiplying by clicking little balls along wires, as the Chinese still do. So were the Saracens. Now, they seized upon the Hindu numbers, that did not hinder their minds or their acts.

Americans call these figures Arabic; they number these pages. A row of them is on every typewriter, and at its end there is a circle: zero.

The Saracens' free minds first grasped that concept: zero. Nothing: an absence of any number, that is a number. They added zero to the nine numbers that had been known.

Any mathematician will tell you that, without zero, there could not be mathematics. Without zero, Americans would have

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[45] There were Muslims who were interested in metaphysics, but they went not to the universities that grew up around the mosques, but to the Sufi orders.

[46] The Arabic word for science, *`ilm*, literally means knowledge, and in Islam is applied to all knowledge. Islam makes no division between the sacred and the profane. Whether you study the Qur'an or the heavens you are studying the signs of God.

[47] See Ahmad (1992) for a simple summary of Muslim scientific innovations.

no engineering, no chemistry, no astronomy, no measurement of substance or space. Without zero, there could not be a skyscraper, a subway, a modern bridge or highway, a car, an airplane, a radio, a city water supply, or rayon or cellophane or aluminum or stainless steel or a permanent wave. There could not be modern science, the modern world, without zero.[48]

Having zero, the Saracens developed arithmetic and added algebra and quadratics.[49] To Euclid's geometry they added plane and spherical geometry.[50]

Applying this mathematics to sun, moon, and stars, they produced astronomy.[51] Across three continents they built observatories. They invented the sextant and the magnetic compass, and accurately calculated latitude, and, not quite so

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[48] There could be no digital computers either. A computer's memory contains nothing but ones and zeroes. A computer with only ones in its memory is useless.

[49] The Muslims didn't invent algebra, although it did get its name from the title of the first book in Arabic on the subject. On the other hand the Muslims developed higher order equations beyond quadratic equations.

[50] Euclid's geometry was a form of plane geometry, which the Muslims expanded upon. On the other hand, the Muslims added spherical trigonometry to the previously known plane trigonometry.

[51] Again, astronomy is an ancient science that the Muslims did not invent. However, their improvements upon it were dramatic and paved the way for the revolutionary ideas that make modern science what it is. A full discussion in layman's terms will be found in *Signs in the Heavens* (Ahmad 1992).

accurately, longitude. They deduced the shape and movement of the spinning earth, around its axis and around the sun,[52] and they measured its size.[53]

If a Saracen navigator who died eight hundred years ago could stand today in the chart-room of the Queen Mary, he would profoundly admire the detail, the printing, and the changes in the charts, but he would have no more difficulty in understanding them than a man who knew ox-carts had in understanding the first carriage he saw. A Saracen captain could take the Queen Mary's charts and instruments and navigate that steamer across the ocean today. The one instrument that baffled him would be the Sperry gyro-compass; he could use it, but he would not understand the electric energy that keeps it spinning.

The Saracens gave Europeans the information that the earth is round,[54] its measurements, the sextant and the magnetic

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[52] That Muslims debated whether or not the earth spun around its axis is documented, although the substance of the debate has been lost (see Ahmad 1992). Mrs. Lane's claim that they knew of the earth's motion around the sun is debatable. The only evidence I have come across in my research on this subject is the fact that Abu Ma`shar tracks time by the number of revolutions of the planets around the sun, as if using a heliocentric system. Van der Waerden (1987) makes the case that Abu Ma`shar got this system from pre-Islamic Persian or Babylonians.

[53] Ahmad (1992).

[54] The ancient Greeks knew that the earth was round. There is a common myth that before Columbus medieval Europeans had lost that knowledge. This common myth is certainly incorrect.

compass, and the portolani, the maps and charts that Columbus took with him on his voyages.

They also did more than anyone else to make Americans healthy.

First they translated Galen's works into Arabic. (Europeans got these later from the Arabic.) Then they did a lot of original research in medicine and surgery. Nine hundred years ago they were using the entire American medical pharmacopoeia of today,[55] excepting only the recently discovered chemical compounds. There was not another great advance in medicine, from the Saracens' time to the American century.

From the Ganges to the Atlantic, the Saracens built medical schools and hospitals. One of these was in Salerno. I find no authority for saying that Europeans first learned medicine and surgery from this school. But, while this school was flourishing in Italy, Italians built the first hospitals in Europe. Within a week's journey of the Saracens' great school of medicine and surgery, Italians were performing the first surgical operations ever performed in Europe.

I doubt that even in the Dark Ages any doctor cut open an important, paying patient without having some idea of what he would find. (He could not learn that in Europe, where at that very

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Educated people in both the European and Islamic worlds new that the earth was round in the Middle Ages (see, *e.g.*, Pacholczyk 1995).

[55] Ajram (1992) argues that pharmacology, as a distinct science from medicine, was developed by the Muslims. As early as the beginning of the ninth century there were sixty drugstores in Baghdad alone (Bammante 1962; Goldstein 1980).

time The Church was forbidding dissection.) And when I learn that these patients recovered from operations removing gall-stones, I do not think that a "revival of Science" saved their lives. I think the Italian doctors had studied surgery in the Saracens' hospital-school of surgery.[56]

They used local anesthetics for these operations. The Saracens had discovered local anesthesia. The next great attack upon pain was the discovery of general anesthesia, in Massachusetts General Hospital in the United States of America, late in the 18th century.[57]

In 13th-century Milan, Italian doctors and surgeons were making cures that all other Europeans thought were miracles. At the same time, the Doges of Venice decreed (and are supposed to have invented) quarantine, *of both contagious and infectious* diseases.[58] That's an odd inspiration, to come to men who had

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[56] Ajram (1992) supports the claim that "Muslims of the 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries were the first true surgeons" with references to Bammante (1962), Garrison (1927), Hayes (1983), Lyons and Petrucelli (1987) and Singer (1959).

[57] Ajram (1992, p. 75) cites evidence for general anesthesia by Muslim physicians including "nasal anesthesia by the application of narcotic-saturated sponges."

[58] Bukhari (1976, 7:624) reports Prophet Muhammad as saying with regard to the plague: "If you hear of an outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it; but if the plague breaks out in a place while you are in it, do not leave that place." Not only were quarantines practiced by the Muslims, but, according to Ajram (1992, p. 70) "Muslim physicians innovated the use of isolation wards for preventing the spread of contagious diseases."

always believed that pestilence was God's anger vented upon mankind.[59]

Both Milan and Venice were thriving commercial cities, thriving entirely from trade with the Saracens. In fact the whole Renaissance, the "revival of learning in Europe," inexplicably "arose" in Italy, that long, narrow peninsula with Saracen civilization brilliant at its tip, and its every port opening to the

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[59] Some would attempt to apply this paradox in the case of the Muslims as well. The Prophet's wife Aisha saw no contradiction, as can be seen from her version of the hadith: "I asked Allah's Apostle about the plague. He told me that it was a Punishment sent by Allah on whom he wished, and Allah made it a source of mercy for the believers, for if one in the time of an epidemic plague stays in his country patiently hoping for Allah's Reward and believing that nothing will befall him except what Allah has written for him, he will get the reward of a martyr." (Bukhari 1976, 4:680) Further, the question was explicitly addressed by the second Caliph, Umar ibn al-Khattab who canceled an expedition to Syria because a plague had broken out there. When a fatalist objected by asking "Are you running from what Allah has ordained?" Umar replied "Yes, we are running from what Allah had ordained to what Allah has ordained. Don't you agree that if you had camels that went down a valley having two places, one green and the other dry, you would graze them on the green one only if Allah had ordained that, and you would graze them on the dry one only if Allah had ordained that?" When Abdurrahman ibn Auf heard of Umar's decision, he quoted the hadith given in the preceding footnote in support of it (Bukhari 1976, 7:625).

Saracens' sea.[60]

Precisely one hundred years after Muhammad died, the Saracens moved into central France. Near Tours a frantically assembled army of Europeans met them. Defeated in the one battle,[61] they retired to Provence and Spain. They did not attack Europe again.

The fanatic Catholic Europeans regarded the Saracens as anti-Christ, the devil on earth. Saracens regarded Europeans as barbarians. A few bands of Catholics remained in the bleak and barren Pyrenees and sometimes harried the Spanish frontier. For five hundred years, the border guards kept them out of Spain.

In Spain the Saracens built great centers of science and art and production and commerce, Cordova, Granada, Seville. From India and Africa and Cathay, students came to the universities in

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[60] Fibonacci (Leonardo of Pisa) provides an outstanding example of this point. He went to North Africa to join his father who had been appointed chief magistrate over the Pisan community in Bugia. He studied under an Arab master and went on to popularize the Arabic numerals in Europe which had hitherto been known only to those intellectuals there familiar with the work of al Khwarizmi. (Gies 1985)

[61] The battlefield of so-called Battle of Tours (or the Battle of Poitiers) has never been found and, according to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica Micropaedia* (v. 8, p. 71) it may have been not so much a battle as "series of running engagements." The article goes on to say: "Charles' victory has sometimes been regarded as decisive for world history. The Muslim advance, however, was really ended by internal dissensions and the revolt of the Berbers in North Africa."

Spain, and from Spain students went to the universities in Baghdad and Delhi. Farmers in rich southern Spain poured into the cities an increasing abundance of foods and raw materials, and out of the cities poured an increasing wealth of goods, woolens and linens and cottons and silks, mosaics, enamels, porcelain, glass, gloves. Ships thronged in the ports, unloading spices, ivory, camphor from the Isles of Spice, tempered steel and finely-wrought brass from Damascus, horses from Arabia and saddles of leather softer than velvet, from Morocco across the straits.

Five hundred years; Saracen Spain was three times as old as these United States are now, when from darkest Europe Pope Urban the Second sent half a million fanatics to attack the Saracens in Palestine.

This unprovoked aggression began a world war that lasted until the United States subdued the "Barbary pirates" in the Mediterranean. Pirates they were, no doubt; but they did not know it; they thought they were fighting the Europeans, who had attacked them first.

From the European chroniclers of this war we get almost our only glimpses of the Saracens' world.

The cause of this war was a struggle for Authority in Europe. The Church was divided; there were two Popes, and Pope Urban was the weaker.

No one knows, positively, what his motives were in starting the Crusades.[62] Apparently he wanted the three results he got.

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[62] The Crusades were triggered by Pope Urban II's call at the Council of Cleremont in 1095.

The Crusades enabled him to oust the other Pope; they diminished the killing in Europe; and during the absence of the fighting men, The Church became The Authority.

There was good reason for the Crusades; it is truly doubtful whether Europeans would have survived if the Pope had not got rid of the barons. Their ceaseless wars were killing too many people by starvation.

For more than a century, the Church had been decreeing peace in Europe. First, the Popes declared the Peace of God; no one paid any attention. Then they decreed the Truce of God, a long week-end from Wednesday night to Monday morning. If the ruling classes would only take that vacation every week, then common men could farm and trade on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Sunday was of course God's day. And on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays the ruling classes could go on trying to move their frontiers, and killing each other's farmers and traders. But The Church was not yet strong enough to enforce this Truce of God.

The Saracen world was peaceful at the time, except for a family quarrel among the Turks, newly converted pagans who had recently seized Baghdad. The Christian Emperor of Constantinople was fighting barbarians in what is now Hungary.

In Europe, Pope Urban the Second summoned all the barons to a great council, and made a speech that roused them to frenzy. He called upon them to save the tomb of Christ from the children of the Devil, and he gave complete forgiveness of all sins to every man who would go, and instant entrance to Paradise to any man who died on the way to kill infidels.

The fighting Europeans at once began what historians call the remarkable phenomenon of the Crusades, an outburst of greed

and highly practical politics, and of a natural desire to get out of that Europe to Heaven, which lasted for two centuries.

"Free the Holy Land!" was its slogan.

Muslims had held the Holy Land for five hundred years and Christians had been worshipping at its Christian shrines, which Muslims reverently guarded. Christian shrines are Muslim shrines and Jerusalem has always been a Holy City to Muslims, who revere Abraham, Moses, Gideon, Samuel, and Christ as prophets of God.[63]

Saracens had set the guard that still stands–or did, when I was in Jerusalem–at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Night and day for more than a thousand years an armed Muslim has stood there, to keep Christians from killing Christians of rival sects at the tomb of Christ.

On the most holy day of the Christian year, the guard retires. For the twenty-four hours of Easter Day, no infidel presence profanes the tomb from which Christ rose. Then occurs the miracle; fire from the tomb lights candles in the darkness, and Christians kill Christians.

At sunset of Easter Day every year, the Muslim guard returns to his post and the police of Jerusalem carry the Christian corpses out of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, sometimes

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[63] "The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord as do the men of faith. Each one (of them) believes in God and His angels, His books and His messengers 'We make no distinction (they say) between one and another of His messengers.' And they say: 'We hear and we obey; (We seek) Your forgiveness Our Lord and to You is the end of all journeys.'" (Qur'an 2:285)

hundreds of bodies, sometimes only dozens.

There are some two hundred sects of Muslims.[64] They have never quarreled at the mosque of Umar, which is Mohammed's shrine in Jerusalem. No Christian stands guard there.

Nearly half a million Crusaders crossed the Bosporus in the first Crusade. The sympathy of the Christian Emperor in Constantinople was with the Saracens;[65] he did all he could to hinder, harass and divide the Crusaders, while at the same time getting rid of them himself. They defeated the Saracens in one battle, and besieged Nicaea. The Emperor made an alliance with its Saracen defenders, and moved his own troops into the city.[66]

The Crusaders went on to Antioch, and besieged it. They devastated the surrounding country so thoroughly that they almost starved to death. Under the eyes of the guards on

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[64] There are numerous schools of thought among the Muslims, but really only three "sects." Wars have broken out between Muslims (witness the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980's) but they are not sectarian (Iraq is mostly and Iran is overwhelmingly, shi`ite) and the disputes are political rather than denominational.

[65] Before the Crusades had actually begun, Alexius, the Emporer of Byzantium had asked the Pope for assistance in fighting against the Seljuk Turks. Baldwin (1980) gives a somewhat different account of his reasons for subsequently wavering.

[66] The siege of Nicaea described here took place in May-June 1097. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Baldwin 1980) makes no mention of the alliance between Emporer Alexius and the Muslims, but states that the city was turned over to the Byzantines by the Crusaders in accord with a previous agreement.

Antioch's walls, they cooked and ate the Saracens they killed.

They could not take Antioch. A Christian commander of Muslim troops in the besieged Muslim city, betrayed it to them. He let them in secretly at night; they massacred the whole population. The bodies rotting in the streets and the wells caused a mysterious sickness that killed thousands of them.

They went on toward Jerusalem, finding only deserted villages and towns on the way. From impregnable walled cities, the amirs sent embassies offering to pay the Crusaders not to disturb them. An envoy from the Sultan of Egypt, who held Jerusalem, met them, bringing the Sultan's suggestion that they fulfill their vow to the Pope by entering Jerusalem peacefully, as pilgrims.

The Crusaders moved warily, in this country of magic. Certainly they were surrounded by the sons or close allies of Satan himself, for long before the news could reach these infidels by any earthly means, they knew that Crusaders were coming.

With Christian guides who joined them along the way, the Crusaders went on toward Jerusalem. South of Beirut, a miracle occurred. Over their heads in the air, a hawk wounded a pigeon. It fell to the ground. Attached to its leg was a silver cylinder containing a strange thing, unknown to the Crusaders—a piece of paper with marks upon it.[67] The Christian Syrians explained that

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[67] The secret of paper, which had been invented by the Chinese was closely guarded until the Muslims acquired it as ransom for the release of prisoners captured during the conquest of Samarkand in 753. "By 1000 the entire Islamic world was enjoying bound books, wrapping paper and paper napkins" (Mokyr 1990).

this was Arabic writing, and read it.

"The emir of Akka to the lord of Caesaria, greeting. A race of dogs, stupid and quarrelsome, hath passed by me, moving without order. As thou lovest the Faith, do what thou mayest, and have others do, all that may hurt them. Send this word to other citadels and fortresses."[68]

In two years, the Crusaders had fought two open battles and a few skirmishes; they had unsuccessfully besieged two cities and taken Antioch by treachery. Of the 426,000 Crusaders who had invaded the country, 30,000 reached Palestine.

They found the palm groves, the vineyards, the orchards of figs, the villages and towns and the white-walled village of Ramlah deserted.

A hundred Crusaders rode into Bethlehem and found it a Christian town built around the Cathedral of the Virgin Mary. The people, priests and monks, entertained them royally. They rode back toward Jerusalem, and came to the peaceful church of the Blessed Mother of Christ, in the Garden of Gesthemane on the Mount of Olives.

For five weeks they attacked gray-walled Jerusalem on its heights. They battered its walls with every known engine of war; from thirty miles away they hauled timbers and built thirty-foot towers, and under a rain of boulders and pitch and Greek fire they advanced the towers and rushed across blazing drawbridges into hand-to-hand fighting on the tops of the walls. They took

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[68] From "The Chronicle of the Anonymous," quoted by Lamb (1930).

Jerusalem, and for two days and nights they slaughtered men, women, children, babies, in the houses, down the alleys, over the roofs. Around the mosque of Umar where the pavement is flat, their horses charged fetlock-deep in blood. Only one little group of the many Christians in Jerusalem, huddled together in the last extremity of terror before these bloody killers and unable to make them understand any known language, suddenly sang in Greek a part of a Christian mass; and the Crusaders, recognizing it, swerved by and left them alive.

Jerusalem, then, was one of the feudal kingdoms that the Crusaders established during successive Crusades, in Palestine and Syria and, unhappily for the Christian Armenians, in Armenia Minor. These kingdoms lasted for about eighty years. The Saracens did not attack them. The Christian Kings held Jerusalem for years with less than a hundred soldiers.

Before the Crusaders had reached Jerusalem, they had begun to adopt the Muslim dress. In a few years, they were living, eating, behaving like Muslims. Their sons, born in these Crusaders' kingdoms, *grew up so tolerant that they let Muslims worship in the Christian churches.*[69]

How does it happen that the Crusaders found so many Christians living among the infidels? Why, Christians lived there all the time. They were part of the Saracens' world. Muslims did not exterminate people whose religious belief was different; here they still are, in lands that the Muslims held for a thousand years– the Armenians, Albanians, Greeks, Copts, Maronites, Druses,

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[69] The Crusaders would occasionally retain a prayer niche for the Muslims in mosques that they had appropriated for churches, and most mosques were eventually restored (Baldwin 1980).

Jews, Parsees, Yezedees, Hindus, to mention a few.

It was Europeans who massacred heretics, to the last infant whose parents had the slightest knowledge that men's minds are free.

Europeans slaughtered the Albigenses, the Waldensians, the Socinians, the Huguenots, the Covenanters, and scores of other groups. Five hundred years after the Crusades, Protestants and Catholics were fleeing to the American wilderness to save their lives from European fanaticism.

Before they took Jerusalem, the Crusaders had met the Saracens only once in open battle. From that day they respected them. In contrast to the bludgeoning Europeans, the Saracen fighters were swift as wind. They wore light helmets of Damascene steel, and a body-armor of gilded steel mesh that stopped an arrow but was so sheer that a whole suit of it crumpled into a handful. They were lean, agile, quick, and they rode small horses as swift as their thin, flexible swords. They attacked the flank of their enemy's army, and wheeled and formed and attacked again with incredible speed.

The iron-armed and iron-armored ranks of Christendom charged straight forward with a full-throated roar, "God wills it!" But the Saracens, under their flying green silk banners, swept like a wave and struck at the flank, calling out an ululating cry that sounded to the Crusaders like the howl of wolves. *Lâ ilâha il Allâh*!–there is only one God.

When the Crusaders went out of Jerusalem to attack Ascalon, they were already adopting the Saracens' battle tactics.

They were still unable to guess the uses of a great deal of their loot. At Antioch their bewilderment was pitiable. They sat down on beds and leapt up terrified by a movement beneath

them; they had never seen a mattress. They did not know how to deal with the draperies, carpets, cushions, the silks, linens, leathers, the unknown metals, strange utensils, and clothes. The fabrics seemed magical; chiffons, that clung like cobwebs to fingers, and, their chronicles say, a silk that changed its color.

They sniffed at strange liquids in curious containers; they did not know what an oil-lamp was. Gingerly they tasted unknown substances; a white powder, delicious but perhaps poisonous; they had never heard of sugar. In small gold boxes and in tiny tubes with jeweled stoppers were other substances with strange tastes; they had not seen cosmetics. (Saracen women used all the cosmetics that American women use, and a few more. No other women in history were ever so well-groomed, until this generation of American women.)

In Antioch, and again in Jerusalem, the Crusaders whose castles were rude stone walls and floors of earth or damp stone covered thick with rotting reeds, came into rooms like jewels, the floors tiled, the walls and ceilings of mosaic. By a low couch covered with taut, snow-white linen stood an ebony taboret; a finger-tip could not feel the lace-work of mother-of-pearl set into its top. A delicate lattice-work of an unknown wood mysteriously let one look out through the window, though no one could look in, and a faint scent came from this lattice-work. It was sandal-wood.

Wondering and rummaging, peering into hiding-places, dragging out and killing some quivering thing, a child or a slave, the Crusaders came upon objects that seemed to be made of some kind of jewel. Could there be in this country so many jewels, so large? These vessels were transparent. But not jewels; seize one, it crushed to pieces that cut the hand. It was glass.

It was a country of magicians; all Europeans heard that it was.

But the most amazing thing to the Crusaders must have been its cleanliness. (Americans are the cleanest people on earth now.)

The Crusaders got wet in the rain or when they crossed rivers. And a bath was a solemn rite that every page performed, after his all-night vigil before the altar, on the morning before he was made a knight. But Muslims bathed five times a day.[70]

This was Muhammad's idea.[71] After he died, the friends whom he called his "companions" gathered up every saying of his that anyone had written down or remembered, and made a book of them, the Qur'an.[72] His point of view was always

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[70] Shocking though this revelation of the difference in attitudes towards cleanliness in the Middle Ages between Muslims and Europeans may be to modern readers, it is no secret. James Clavell makes reference to European antipathy to bathing as late as the encounter with Japan in his novel *Shogun*. During the Spanish Inquisition, one of the signs used to spot insincere conversions to Christianity was excessive cleanliness (see Morgan 1723-1725).

[71] The cleanliness requirement is found in the Qur'an and to Muslims is therefore not "Muhammad's idea," but God's. See the following footnote.

[72] Mrs. Lane has confused the sayings of the Prophet which are called hadith, with the scripture revealed to Muhammad, Qur'an. (This confusion occurs frequently and not only among non-Muslims, alas.) The difference is not restricted to the fact that Muslims consider the former to be the words of Muhammad and

tolerant, and practical. They pestered him about the pagan rite of turning toward Makkah in prayer; several times he said it didn't matter which way anyone faced; finally he said, Let it go; face toward Makkah.[73] They wanted his decision about gambling and

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the latter the words of God. The Qur'an was written down during the lifetime of the Prophet, while the hadith were initially transmitted orally and written down much later. The canonical edition of the Qur'an was produced shortly after the Prophet's death under the direct supervision of his nearest companions while the hadith were put into canonical form in subsequent generations by varying scholars. While the hadith compiled by Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim are particularly respected, there are four other editions in common use by Sunni Muslims and yet others accepted by the Shi`ah.

[73] The direction of prayer is called the *qiblah*. The pagans faced Makkah and the Jews faced Jerusalem. For a while the Muslims faced Jerusalem to symbolize the continuity of the monotheistic tradition. Then a Qur'anic revelation called for a change of direction to Makkah, causing great consternation. Even today, some critics of Islam have tried to interpret this change of direction as signifying a failed attempt to pander to the Jews of Yathrib. The Qur'an offers its own lucid refutation: "The fools among the people will say: 'What hath turned them from the Qiblah to which they were used?' Say: To God belong both East and West; He guideth whom He will to a Way that is straight. Thus have We made of you an *Ummah* [Community] justly balanced that ye might be witnesses over the nations and the Apostle a witness over yourselves; and We appointed the Qiblah to which thou wast used only to test those who followed the Apostle from those who would turn on their heels (from the faith). Indeed it was (a change) momentous except to those

running water; one can not bathe clean in standing water because the water becomes dirty.

He tied cleanliness to his plan for keeping the truth in men's minds without a church organization. Let everyone repeat to himself, morning, noon, and night, and in mid-morning and mid-afternoon,[78] the fact that there are no pagan gods. And before saying this, bathe in running water. (Remembering trade, he added that men crossing deserts could use sand.) Muhammad himself always washed his hands before and after eating, and rinsed his mouth.[79]

So the Crusaders came into a country where it seemed that everyone was always bathing. Fountains were everywhere, for Muslims saw no reason to go to church to say that there is only one God; they bathed and repeated that fact wherever they were, interrupting work and business only a moment or so. These

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prayer wash your faces and your hands (and arms) to the elbows; rub your heads (with water); and (wash) your feet to the ankles. If ye are in a state of ceremonial impurity bathe your whole body. But if ye are ill or on a journey or one of you cometh from offices of nature or ye have been in contact with women and ye find no water then take for yourselves clean sand or earth and rub therewith your faces and hands. God doth not wish to place you in a difficulty but to make you clean and to complete His favor to you that ye may be grateful" (Qur'an 5:6).

[78] There is an evening prayer rather than a mid-morning prayer. The five prayers are: dawn (*fajr*), noon (*zuhr*), mid-afternoon (*'asr*), evening (*maghrib*), and night (*isha'*).

[79] He also cleansed his teeth with a natural toothbrush called the *miswâk*.

innumerable, flowing fountains made a profound first impression upon the invading Europeans.

Anyone, or any group, that wanted to, built a fountain, just as anyone built a mosque. There was no more organization about a mosque than in a university.[80] A mosque's courtyard is quiet, and pleasant with its splashing fountain; beggars and philosophers sat there. Some had made money enough, some had inherited money, some lived on alms in order to give their whole time to thinking about the nature of the universe and of man. Five times a day, one of them climbed the mosque's minaret and called out that there is no God but God. Those to whom it was convenient repeated the fact in the mosque, after bathing at its fountain, and someone might read aloud from the Qur'an, or not. Men in the neighborhood kept the mosque repaired if they wanted to; if they didn't, it fell to ruin.

Imagine the Crusader who had grabbed a small kingdom in Syria, dining for the first time with a neighboring amir. A King wearing harsh leather, coarse wool and eighty pounds of iron-chain armor, and used to gnawing meat heartily from the bone, tossing the bone to the dogs, and pouring down his throat a quart of ale.

The stone walls and stone-paved courtyard of his host's castle would be home-like, and rooms like those he had looted would not surprise him. He would see, now, how silk garments

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[80] The universities spontaneously grew up around the mosques. It is not precise to say that there was no organization. There was no hierarchy. Organization existed, but it was spontaneous, rather than dictated.

should be worn.[81] But what did he do, when a servant offered him a silver bowl with an open-filagree cover, and poised a slim pitcher above it? If he lifted the cover and looked into the bowl, it was empty. The pitcher was full of warm, rose-scented water.

Before the Saracen ate, he washed his hands in scented water poured over them; the water vanished through the bowl's filagree cover. He wiped his hands on a linen damask or a terry-cloth towel (our bath towel). A servant set between the host and his guest an inlaid metal tray, and placed upon it a porcelain bowl of food. The Saracen ate with his fingers, as Europeans did, but he did not wipe them on his clothes; he washed them again.

The meal was served in courses; platter after platter, bowl after bowl. After each course, the Saracen washed his hands, and dried them on a fresh towel.

Not one dog sat yearning for bones and scratching fleas. The floor of tiles or polished stone was shining clean. On a dias, the host and guest sat on thick-piled, silken rugs, richly colored, and clean. Before a Saracen entered a house, he left his shoes outside.

The meal itself was amazing and strange. The meats were prepared in ways unknown, with seasonings and sauces. There were salads, and frozen sherbets. There was a strange drink, in tiny cups–coffee, with sugar in it. No European had ever seen many cereals, vegetables, and fruits that the Saracens ate: rice, and spinach, and asparagus, lemons, melons, peaches.

The world's first scientific farmers were producing them.

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[81] A pious Muslim male would avoid wearing silk, as ostentatious. But to the Crusaders, even fine muslin might have seemed sufficiently impressive.

In Europe, the serfs and oxen hauled wooden plows that scratched the earth, and the crop was whatever God willed. The land was twice plowed every year, and half of it always lay fallow, for the earth grows tired and needs rest. When Richard of England crossed Europe, he must have been proud of the strong English land; in England, only one-third of the fields lay fallow.

But not an acre of arable land ever rested in the Saracens' world. From the Atlantic to Cathay, across three continents, the Saracen farmers were fertilizing the land, deep-plowing and contour-plowing, and irrigating, and rotating their crops. They were pouring into the markets an abundance of nearly every food that the earth produces, and taking in return such a wealth of goods as the world had never seen before.

These goods are still renowned: damask linens, mohair fabrics, muslin, Morocco leather, Syrian silks, oriental rugs, mosaics, inlaid woods, glassware and porcelains, enamels, filagree and inlaid work in metals. Damascus steel was never equaled until very recently in these United States, and it is not yet surpassed in quality. In 1919 at the Peace Conference, the French demanded and got Syria, and stopped the manufacture of Syrian silks, a Saracen manufacture fifteen hundred years old and still producing silks with which the famous weavers of Lyons could not compete.

Americans owe directly to the Saracens our southwestern and Californian architecture, our cotton industry, our asphalt paving, and a long list of such things as beds, table and bed linens, small occasional tables, strawberries, ice-cream. Americans speak Arabic when they say, mattress, sofa, cotton,

talcum, sugar, coffee, sherbert, naphtha, gypsum, benzine.[82] Our cars run, our streets are paved, our houses are furnished and our bodies clothed with things that the Saracens created.

The Christian kingdoms in the Saracens' world lasted less than a century. The heirs of their Crusading founders became indistinguishable from the Muslims in their customs, manners and dress, as the other Christians were in that civilization.[83]

Then the Muslim amir (who was a Kurd) proposed an alliance with England. He offered his sister in marriage to Richard the Lion-Hearted,[84] who was crusading at the time. But Richard intended to return to England, and sensibly he refused to take home a Muslim Queen.[85]

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[82] Although not all these words are necessarily native to Arabic, they came to Europe from the Arabic.

[83] Many went beyond adopting Muslim customs and embraced the religion of Islam itself. See Arnold (1961, pp. 88-90).

[84] Muslim jurisprudence does not permit a Muslim woman to marry a non-Muslim. Mrs. Lane is thinking of the proposal of al-Malik al-`Adil, Salahuddin's brother, to marry King Richard's sister (Gabrieli 1989, p. 227). Muslim law permits Muslim men to marry monotheist women from among "the People of the Book," i.e., monotheists who had received a revelation from a prophet preceding Muhammad.

[85] Actually, that Richard should return to England was part of al-Malik al-`Adil's proposal. The plan was that al-'Adil would marry Joanna of Sicily, Richard's sister whom he had brought with him. Richard would give the Palestinian lands in his possession to Joanna and Salahuddin would give the Palestinian lands in his possession (which included Jerusalem) to al-`Adil.

Since the Christian King would not make peace, the Muslims attacked and took Jerusalem.[86] They did not sack it, and as soon as its defenders surrendered, they released their prisoners. The terms that the victorious amir imposed upon the invaders were that they must go home. He gave them forty days in which to dispose of their property or pack it before leaving.

During the forty days, the people in Jerusalem bitterly complained to the amir that the departing Christians were seizing everything they could lay hands on.[87] They demanded that the

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All prisoners on both sides would be released and Richard would return home with the relic of the "True Cross" which Salahuddin would turn over to him. Richard sent a messenger to Salahuddin indicating that the proposal only lacked some foothold for Richard in Jerusalem by which he could avoid the wrath of his allies. Salahuddin offered to satisfy this request by giving the priests the churches and oratories of Jerusalem. Richard procrastinated saying that he needed the Pope's permission to give his widowed sister in marriage to al-'Adil, but that if the Pope refused he would offer to substitute one of his nieces, for whom no permission was needed (Gabrieli 1989, ch. 6).

[86] Richard did accept the peace treaty and the Muslims were already in possession of Jerusalem. Mrs. Lane is now thinking of events that took place earlier.

[87] Salahuddin's minister Imad-ad-Din reports that the Crusaders "scavenged their own churches, stripped them of ornaments and carried off candelabra and vases of gold and silver, gold and silken curtains and draperies. They broke open and emptied the [poor-]boxes in the churches and took from the storage chests the treasurers they contained" (Gabrieli 1989, p. 162).

amir stop this plundering. The amir replied, "If I stop them, they will say that I have broken my word. Let us give them an opportunity to praise the goodness of our religion."[68]

He let the people in Jerusalem protect their own property as best they could, and the Europeans got away with quite a lot of loot.

But the returning Crusaders brought back to Europe the first idea of a gentleman that Europeans had ever had. Until they invaded the Saracens' civilization, they had never known that a strong man need not be brutal. The Saracens were splendid fighters when they fought, but they were not cruel; they did not torture their prisoners, they did not kill the wounded. In their own country, they did not persecute the Christians. They were brave men, but they were gentle. They were honorable; they told the truth, they kept their word.

This ideal of a gentleman especially impressed the English. It is still producing perhaps the finest class of human beings on earth today, the men and women of the British ruling class. It is an ideal that permeates all of American life. This is what surprises so many people in many parts of the world, when they see and meet the common American soldiers and sailors.

From such dim indications an American can get some idea of the people with whom the Italians were dealing, before and while they were "awakening" Europe.

At that same time, the Jews were in Europe, from Spain. Subversive ideas spread also from them; for instance, the rumor

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[68] Ibid.

that the earth is round.[89] Roger Bacon (when he could get out of jail) was corresponding with Saracen scholars in the universities of Spain. The feudal system's equilibrium, that had been so perfect through the 12th century, was threatened by questions in men's minds. The Church was more and more strictly suppressing new heresies.

All Italians were prospering from trade with the Saracens. Italian merchants, traders, sea-captains, sailors, were constantly meeting men of greater knowledge and wider experience than theirs, richer men, better dressed, better fed, cleaner and better groomed; men who thought and acted quickly, acted independently. They had better methods of navigating ships, quicker ways of computing costs and adding bills. With incredible swiftness, they dispatched their business affairs over great distances.

To the Italians, this speed must have been the most startling thing in the Saracens' world. A European who traveled eighteen miles in one day had done something to brag about for years. A Saracen thought nothing of sending a parcel two hundred miles and getting a receipt for it tomorrow.

A thousand years ago, the Saracens' pony express habitually covered two hundred miles a day, anywhere on land from Morocco to Bokhara or the Ganges. At a pinch, it could do two thousand miles in eight days. Such speed over such a

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[89] Educated Europeans already knew that the earth was round. This was known even to the ancient Greeks. The truly revolutionary ideas that Bacon picked up from the Muslims were about how to do inductive science. For a complete discussion see Ahmad (1992).

distance was not equalled until the pony express ran from St. Joseph, Missouri, to San Francisco.

The Saracens' postal service was swift, secret, free, and universal. You can see a remnant of it today in Ragusa (Dubrovnik) on the Dalmatian coast.

Ragusa was one of the Free Cities that "rose" in Italy during the dawn of the Renascence. Italian traders created them. The Free Cities were the only places in Europe at that time, where men could manage their own affairs. And Ragusa, at least, was a place where a man might believe whatever he believed with no interference.

While Authority in Europe was still whipping up fanaticism to crusading fervor, Europeans in Free Ragusa were building churches of equal beauty and dignity for men of all faiths; a Roman Catholic church, a Greek Catholic church, a mosque and a fountain for Muslims. This is religious freedom.

Under the arcade of the market place, above the door that led to the offices of the city government, you see today a painting of Mother Ragusa, the Free City. The colors are still clear and fresh. Grouped around Mother Ragusa's knees, and equally enclosed by her arms, are children of all peoples; the Norman, the Mongol, the African, the Slav and the Levantine. Here is human equality and human brotherhood.

Below the portrait stands a marble bench on which three judges sat every day, to hear and judge in public any case brought before them. They represented the Free City. They were bound to judge all men with equal justice.

Ragusa prospered enormously. Its merchants rivaled and often outstripped the Venetians. An earthquake completely destroyed the city in the 16th century; they rebuilt it immediately

with all its churches, in such speed that they could not pause to determine property lines, and therefore agreed to build the correct number of shops, all of equal size, leaving adjustments to be made afterward. Prosperity was hardly interrupted. Ragusa was so important that Catholic Spain sought the Free City as an ally, and Ragusa's ships sailed with the Spanish armada against England.

In rebuilding Ragusa, the merchants improved their postal service. They built dove-cotes all along the tops of the city's double walls, under the battlements, and thousands of descendants of the Saracens' pigeon post still flutter about them.

The Saracen cities, and Ragusa, required every foreigner to pay as entrance fee at the city gates, two carrier pigeons from his town. You can still see the barred cages, open now, where the foreign pigeons were filed under the name of their home.

When ships set out on the Adriatic, or caravans on the road that ended in Cathay, the traveling salesman took with him as many Ragusan pigeons as he might require to pay his entrance fee to other cities and to carry his correspondence to the home office. By pigeon he sent back sales reports and market news and his next address. In Ragusa a clerk took the replies, in their sealed cylinders, to the pigeon master, who selected the proper pigeon and attached and dispatched the letters.

This postal service covered land and sea from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. For speed and privacy it was not equaled again until Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone.

Roman post roads are famous, and indeed they were excellent for their purpose, which was military. They were useful to The State, to the privileged class in the Roman Republic, and later to families that had a pull with the Emperor or Empress. But

look for swift transportation and communication available to all ordinary men, and you find that the Saracens created them.

Look for the people whose lives are adjusted to a fast tempo, the people who travel swiftly and far, who communicate with each other quickly over long distances, people who attack space and time and create a civilization rapid, vibrant, depending on speed. Two peoples have done this: the Saracens and the Americans.

Here are two groups of people, as unlike as can possibly be. On the deserts and mountains and in the steamy fertile river valleys from the Ganges to the Atlantic, there were Hindus, Mongols, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Armenians, Persians, Medes, Arabs, Greeks, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Hittites, as many African peoples and a thousand others whose ancestors had worn that soil to dust under their feet before history began.

Ten centuries later, on a virgin continent of primeval forests and great rivers and fresh-water inland seas, there were Spanish, Norwegians, Africans, Dutch, Germans, French and English and Scots and Irish and Swedes, whose ancestors had been here for less than two centuries.

In both cases, suddenly, "As if a spark had fallen, one spark . . . on explosive powder," there is a terrific outburst of human energy.

In both cases, these people create a civilization having these features:

It is scientific, constantly increasing and using scientific knowledge. Its essential function is not war, but production and distribution of goods. It is tolerant of all races and creeds; it is humane. Its standard of living, including standards of cleanliness and health, is the highest in the world. Its tempo is increasingly

rapid, and great speed in communication and transportation is necessary to its existence.

Saracens created that kind of civilization. Americans are creating that kind of civilization.

What have they in common, a Saracen who lived eight hundred years ago, and the American flying overhead today?

They share a common human situation on this earth, and a common human *nature*, and both live in conditions that do not prevent them from using their natural freedom.

The Saracens' civilization ceased to exist. Why?

I lived for some years in the remnants of the Turkish empire, and in Syria and Iraq I looked for such traces as I could find of an answer to that question.

It seems to me that this second attempt to establish conditions in which human energy can work under its natural individual control succeeded, as it did succeed for almost a thousand years, because anarchy was not quite as pure among the Saracens as it was among the Israelites.

All these peoples were already living in many kinds of groups when most of them became Muslims. They created a civilization embracing all the social customs, tribal traditions, and ways of human association that remained from all the cities and empires that had ever existed between the Ganges and the Atlantic.

So their anarchy was more an anarchy of groups than of individuals. Many individuals were completely free in it. But apparently most of them preferred to remain in tribal or family groups, and to accept many forms of authority that could not be enforced.

For example, families made contracts of marriage, subject to the consent of the bride and groom. Muslim marriages are still precisely this. They are not religious sacraments. Neither are they civil contracts; and here I think, is the weakness that eventually ended the Saracens' civilization. There was no civil law.[90]

Marriages were an agreement between families; if it were necessary to enforce the terms of the agreement (which included property settlements from both families) the aggrieved family enforced them.[91]

The only safeguards of property seem to have been possession of the property, individual honesty, and public opinion.[92]

Well, cabins were never locked on the American frontier where there was no law. The real protection of life and property,

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[90] On the contrary, the Muslims had a highly developed jurisprudence called the *fiqh*. The explanation for the fall of the Muslim's civilization lies elsewhere. (See note 99 and also Ahmad 1992.)

[91] An aggrieved party could take the issue to the judge, called a *qadi*, and the government would have to enforce his decision. Private commercial contracts in the United States are enforced in a similar manner, so Mrs. Lane should have been able to appreciate the flexibility and power of the Islamic system if she had only understood it.

[92] On the contrary, the Islamic state enforced property rights from the very beginning. In recent times, some in the West have criticized Muslim law as being overly zealous in protecting property for penalizing habitual professional thievery with an amputation of the hand.

always and everywhere, is the general recognition of the brotherhood of man. How much of the time is any American within sight of a policeman? Our lives and property are protected by the way nearly everyone feels about another person's life and property.

But the Saracens seem to have had no civil law whatever. There were Muhammad's recorded opinions, and those of other wise men; Muslims accept these as rules of conduct. There were the amirs, leaders of groups; like leaders of political parties in this country. There were the Caliphs; the word means, Successor (to Muhammad).[93] The Arabian Nights tell how the Caliphs used their influence.[94]

There were men everywhere, whom their neighbors depended upon to give judgments, like the judgment of Solomon in the case of the two women who claimed the same child. I knew such a Qadi very well; he was an expert cabinetmaker and earned a good living at his trade.

A westerner who has seen a quarrel flare dangerously in

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[93] The Caliphs were heirs to Muhammad's temporal power. They were not heirs to the Prophethood.

[94] The Arabian Nights tales are fabulous fiction, not history. In any case the Islamic jurisprudence is not developed by the Caliphs, but by the jurists, called *fuqaha'*. These are legal scholars, independent of the government who do not legislate, but rather work to discover the laws which God has laid down for the governance of societies in the same manner that natural scientists seek to discover the laws God has laid down for the governance of physical, chemical, and biological systems. See Ahmad (1992).

an Arab bazaar will never forget it. One voice, one word, pierces that din of bargaining; the sound shocks the turmoil to utter silence. Out of it comes a mob-roar. "Brothers! You are brothers Muslims, remember you are brothers!" With that roar goes a mob-rush. Get out of it, quick.

It is over in a moment. Scores of hands tear the quarreling men apart, snatch the knives from their fists or sashes. An unperturbed din of bargaining rises again, while small crowds of men who can leave their own affairs surround the angry men and go with them to the nearest Qadi, who, if he wants to keep his reputation for wisdom, must then and there settle the quarrel in a way that satisfies everyone's sense of justice.

You admire the method, because it works. But it is not law.[95]

Actually it is the way in which men always, everywhere, keep the peace, when no one of them has a recognized right to use force. Then each one feels his responsibility. This is the way Americans kept the peace on the frontier, and keep it now on fishing and hunting trips and in clubrooms.

The Saracens evidently got along very well for nearly a thousand years with no law. They modified, in many ways, the

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[95] Except that it *is* law. The qadi is guided by the *fiqh* which is highly developed. There are, within Islam a number of recognized schools of law (*e.g.* Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi, Hanbali, Ibadi, Zaidi, and Ja`fari) with detailed precedents and opinions (fatwas) for dealing with all kinds of issues. The idea that law is discovered rather than legislated is not unique to Islam, and Noble prize-winning economist F. A. Hayek has argued that it is necessary for the establishment of liberty. (See Ahmad 1993.)

pure anarchy of freedom. From the past, they kept tribal customs. They increased the natural authority of parents over children, and the natural influence of wise, able, successful men and women. Workers formed fraternal groups; these still exist, more than a thousand years old. The fraternity of boatmen clusters around every ship that anchors in the Bosporus, and takes no passengers or freight ashore until the boatmen's chief and the ship's captain have agreed upon terms suited to that day's and that ship's circumstances.

All these are methods of using free energy flexibly, in mutual action. They are ways of controlling combined human energies without restricting individual freedom. How many of such methods there were in the great days of that lost civilization, precisely what they were, how they worked or failed to work– who knows? The subject does not interest Europeans, and I can not read Arabic.[96]

There must have been many methods of controlling by mutual consent, all the activities of that busy civilization spanning three continents with trade, discovering and increasing and applying scientific knowledge, creating and distributing an unprecedented wealth of goods and of knowledge, literature, art, architecture–constantly improving all living conditions.

There was no Authority. There was no State. There was

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[96] One must forgive Mrs. Lane her lack of knowledge on these points, for when she wrote these words the state of Islamic studies in the West was truly appalling. Since then things have begun to turn around, although much of the old mythology lives on, compounded by cases of new disinformation.

no Church.[97]

Men were spending enormous sums of money in building roads and observatories and universities and hospitals and mosques and fountains and public gardens. Scholars were collecting and exchanging manuscripts and books; architects were creating the world's most beautiful buildings. Traders were managing businesses extending thousands of miles. How did they do it? What methods did they develop, from eight hundred years of experience?

All those complexes of free energies, operating across three continents and three seas, involving millions of persons in inter-dependent relationships, were geared to speed, the speed of the pony express and the pigeon's flight.

When the Turk's blitzkrieg struck, it tore that world apart. The pony express ceased to run; the pigeons fluttered over their

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[97] There was no Church, in the Western sense of the term. There was no Authority as Mrs. Lane uses the term (see Preface), although God is the Authority in the sense of the Judge of Mankind. The assertion that there was no State, however, may be an oversimplification. Perhaps Mrs. Lane meant that the rulers, the Caliphs and amirs, and the judges, the qadis, lacked the absolute Authority which the Western nation-state has given unto itself. The Muslim state is a limited government—limited by the divine law. In the words of the first Caliph, Abu Bakr upon his inauguration: "If I do well in my job, help me. If I do wrong redress me. Truthfulness is fidelity, and lying is treason.... Obey me as long as I obey God and His Prophet. But if I disobey God's command or His Prophet, then no obedience is incumbent upon you." (Haykal 1976, pp. 510-511).

sacked towns.

Nothing remained to hold together the millions of living persons who had been creating that vast, delicate and intricate civilization. By no means all of them were Muslims. All races, colors and nations were Muslims, mingling, with no distinction between them but their individual qualities as men; the one thing that Muslims have ever had in common is their belief, and their daily saying, that there is only one God.

No single organization, religious, political or social, extended over that whole tri-continental civilization. And there was nothing to take their place; there was no Law.

I think there is a natural necessity for a civil law, a code, explicitly stated, written and known; an impersonal thing, existing outside all men, as a point of reference to which any man can refer and appeal.[98] Not any form of control, for each individual controls himself; but a law, acting as a not-human third party in relationships between living persons; an impersonal witness to contracts, a registrar of promises and deeds, of ownership and transfers of ownership of property; a not-living standard existing in visible form, by which man's acts can be judged and to which men's minds can cling.

In the 15th century, the savage Ottoman Turks first realized that men are free, and became a cyclone of energy striking the Saracens' world. In that world, fifteen generations

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[98] The Muslim revivalists struggling to implement the *sharî`ah* would certainly agree with Mrs. Lane on this point. The Muslim world lacks a dynamic adherence to the *sharî`ah* today, but it embraced the concept during the golden era about which Mrs. Lane has written.

had lived and died since freedom was an electrifying discovery. You may be sure that practical men took their free action for granted and never thought about it. Suddenly the average man was helpless, broke, unable to deal with a world that no longer worked. A business man, he was no philosopher. He knew he was not responsible for this collapse, yet a practical man knows that effects come from causes; something must be responsible.

Between the 15th century and the 17th century, the Muslims forgot the God of Abraham, Christ, and Muhammad.[99]

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[99] What the Muslims forgot was that *ijtihâd* was among the sources of Islamic law. As I have said, Islamic law, *sharî`ah*, does exist. Until the about the 15th century, it was derived from four basic sources: the Qur'an, the practice of the Prophet (called *sunnah*), consensus (*ijmâ`*, which might be consensus of the scholars or of the community, a debated point) and from the individual struggle for understanding, called *ijtihâd*. This last, it should be understood, is a general process which subsumes a number of specific processes. Al-`Alwani (1994) notes that as early as the time of the righteous Caliphs, Ali engaged in specific processes of *ijtihâd* including *qiyâs* (analogical reasoning), *istishâb* (consideration of circumstances), *istihsân* (juristic preference for a "more subtle" analogy over a "less relevant" one), and *istislâh* (consideration of the welfare of both the individual and society as a whole). Starting in the ninth century, some Muslim rulers had attempted to protect themselves from the independence of the legal scholars by "closing the door to ijtihâd." In the fifteenth century this was achieved in the Sunni world by the device of declaring that there were no longer scholars of sufficient stature to challenge or revise the legal opinions of the giants of earlier generations. Henceforth, Muslims were expected to engage in *taqlîd* (unquestioning imitation of

They came to think of God as Authority, controlling men. I believe they could find no other explanation for the ruin of their world. They said it was an act of God; it was completely unreasonable, so they said that God is Unknowable. And this belief, prevailing among the millions, affected the newly-converted Turks, so that they, too, reverted to paganism. The Saracen world and the Turks who had conquered it, sank into stagnation.

Turkey was the Sick Man of Europe. From 1820 to 1924, the men who governed the Five Powers of Europe gathered solicitously around that sick bed, to hack off hunks of the patient. Human energy in Turkey was so weak that the people would not act, either for or against the Sultan. In the whitelace marble palaces along the Bosporus, there could be nothing but palace-intrigues.

I remember a Young Turk in 1923. He was young, and passionately admired everything western. He was rapturous because Turkish women were now working in factories, like western women. Hats were fundamentally important to him, and he demanded an edict forbidding Turkish women to wear veils.[100]

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previous practice). New circumstances would have to be dealt with by *qiyâs* (analogy with earlier opinions) alone. This deprived the Islamic law of its dynamic element, turning it into a stagnant traditionalism unable to deal with a changing world. Such stagnation renders the law irrelevant, giving onlookers like Mrs. Lane the misperception that the Muslim world has no law at all.

[100] What was, and in an important way still is, banned is the headscarf. Although commonly called *hijâb,* which means veil or screen, it is really just a headcovering that does not hide the face.

Mustapha Kemal issued that edict later; Turkish women felt as American women would feel if a nudist dictator ordered the police to permit no woman to wear any clothes in public. That edict was called, "freeing Turkish women." It shut a generation of them into their houses for the rest of their lives.

This Young Turk assured me that Turkey was awake at last; that Mustapha Kemal was a great liberator, who would keep European invaders out of Turkey, and compel Turks to act like Europeans; or else.

He said, "Praise be to God, at last we Turks are rebelling against God, like you Americans!"

I was shocked. He was amazed that I did not know my own country. He explained, as to a baby moron, "Surely you know that God made the world. God made the mountains and

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More than thirty years after Mrs. Lane wrote this incisive analysis of why the ban on the headscarf constitutes oppression of Muslim women, Iranian women, in defiance of a similar ban on the Iranian traditional covering called the chador, put on chadors *en masse* to symbolize their opposition to the shah's regime and to their desire to replace his dictatorship with rule of law, i.e., *sharî`ah*. As this book goes to press, the Turkish military is threatening the Turkish democracy to prevent the freely elected Islamic leadership from repealing laws that infringe upon the right of Turkish women to decide for themselves whether they will wear headscarves in certain public places. The French are also expelling girls who wear the headscarf to public schools, and a law banning the headscarf has been under discussion in Montreal. In Philadelphia women who cover their hair are not allowed to teach in the public schools.

rivers. You Americans refuse to accept God's will. You cut down the mountains; you make the rivers run as you will, Ah, but that is magnificent! Man's will against God's! And you do it, you succeed! All praise to God! We Turks, too, we are rebelling against Him!"

Muslims had gone back to the static, changeless universe and the controlling Authority. They had escaped from the responsibility of freedom. Muslim life was stagnant for six centuries because Muslims no longer knew that individuals control themselves and are responsible for their own acts and their own lives and for the human world they make.

From Sultan to slave, every good Muslim lived in submission to the Unknowable, as Spartans submitted to the Law of Lycurgus, as savages submit to tabu, as communists and fascists and nazis submit to The Party, and as some Americans believe that individuals should and must submit to an enforced Social Good, to the Will of the Majority, to a Planned Economy, to many other pagan gods that do not exist.

Through Italy, the Saracens gave Europeans "the awakening of Europe." Through Spain, the last flare of their energy gave the world the discovery of America.

Of course Columbus did not discover America. Irish, Danes, Norwegians, Basques, and at least one Spaniard saw America before Columbus did.[101] The Breton fishermen

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[101] A number of Muslims also preceded Columbus to the New World. Lawrence (1962) discusses the case for believing that the Mandingoes of the Mali and Songhay Empires and perhaps others not only engaged in pre-Columbian cross-Atlantic trade with the

apparently refilled their water-casks every season from New England's rivers. A map now in Venice, drawn three hundred years before Columbus was born, shows Newfoundland correctly, where it is.

Generations of sailors had known there was land in the west. For two centuries at least, Europeans had heard that the earth is round. Many had the Saracens' measurements of it. In longitude, these measurements were inaccurate by some eight thousand miles.[102]

Columbus had to quell a mutiny on his ships, because he used these inaccurate measurements.[103] The Spice Islands did not appear where they should. When he did see land, it was approximately where his charts showed India. He had no doubt

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Native Americans, but may have established colonies in the Americas.

[102] On the contrary, the Muslim measurements of the earth were quite accurate. Al Biruni's determination of the earth's circumference, made in the eleventh century, was off by only 0.2%.

[103] Columbus rejected not only the accurate Muslim measurements, but also the almost as accurate earlier Greek measurements. Columbus' erroneous insistence that the Muslim and Greek measurements overestimated the size of the earth has intrigued historians. Did he deliberately underestimate the size of the earth in order to justify his exploratory mission? Columbus claimed that he could find a shortcut to India by travelling west. The Muslims measurements indicated that India is closer to Europe when approached by traveling east, not west (which is, of course, the case).

that it was India, and assumed that he had somehow missed the islands.

The Saracens had no use for these measurements, no reason to sail around the earth to India. They were in India. Cathay and the Spice Islands were on their doorstep.

But Europeans needed a route to India, and the Crusades taught them that they did. The riches of the world were in the East, and the Saracens had them. Europeans were the Have Not nations, and they knew it.

For two hundred years their sailors coasted along the shores of this continent, and all that time the Kings and the Popes heard that the earth was round, and European scholars had its measurements and charts showing that the land in the West was fabulous Cathay and India and the Isles of Spice, overflowing with ivory and silk and gold.

Then why did not European energy leap to follow the Irish, the Norwegians, the Danes, the Bretons and Basques, as Spanish energy leaped to follow Columbus?

The nature of any energy explains its behavior. The explanation of men's acts, or failures to act, is found in the nature of human energy. Individuals control human energy, and they control it in accordance with their view (true or false) of the universe.

In the 13th century Europe, you find Roger Bacon–called "the father of modern science"–spending much of his life in jail, because Europeans believed that men did not control their own thoughts.

Roger Bacon was actually free, of course. Whenever he got out of jail, he went on corresponding with the universities in

Spain, and sooner or later he said something, and was put back into jail. He controlled his thoughts, his speech, his acts; no one else could. But he was one man among multitudes who believed that the Church and the State controlled them. The Kings and the Popes believed this, too; they believed that they were responsible for the inferior multitudes, and did their best to control them.

So whenever a man like Roger Bacon said what he thought, these Authorities used their real power, force, to put him into a dungeon, where only a jailer could hear him speak, and stone walls and chains kept him from acting as he wanted to act.

But the Kings and the Popes, you may think, were free. Access to India would have made them enormously rich, and they had heard that India was within their reach. You may wonder why they did not send expeditions to the land whose coasts their sailors had seen.

They could not, because the pagan belief that Authority controls individuals does not only prevent individuals from acting freely. It also prevents the men who act as Authority from using their subjects' energies in new ways.[104]

Here you have the very root of Old World thinking. Belief in a controlling Authority rests upon the belief that nothing is being created, that all things have been created.

In six days God created the earth and all that is therein; then (the ancients believed) Creativeness ceased forever; there is no more creative energy; on the seventh day the Creator became

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[104] The importance of permitting the subjects to use their energies in ways unthought of by the rulers is reflected in the principle that Muslims call *shûra*, or consultation. See footnote 23 for an example of *shûra* by the Prophet himself.

Authority controlling what had been created.[105]

The whole idea of Authority controlling the universe and man, depends upon seeing the universe as completed, finished, motionless, changeless.

For if the universe is not completed and static; if, instead, dynamic Energy is creatively operating; then a thing that is impossible at this instant will exist in the coming instant; then all things are changing into new, unprecedented things; tomorrow cannot be known today, and nothing that exists today can control tomorrow.

No Old World mind dares to admit the terrific thought that Reality is Creative Energy,[106] that Change is in the very nature of things.

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[105] More precisely, the ancients believed that on the seventh day the Creator *rested*, ending His creativity. In contrast, the Qur'an identifies God as the One Who creates things *and* sustains them: "It is God Who sustains the heavens and the earth lest they cease (to function): and if they should fail there is none–not one–can sustain them thereafter: verily He is Most Forbearing Oft-Forgiving" (Qur'an 35:41).

The dominant philosophy of Islam, the Ash`arite school, holds that all reality is in a state of continuous creation at the hands of the Almighty. Every instant is a living creation.

[106] "This is so because God is the Reality: it is He Who gives life to the dead and it is He Who has power over all things" (22:6).

"That is because God is the (only) Reality and because whatever else they invoke besides Him is Falsehood; and because God He is the Most High Most Great" (32:30).

True, everyone sees changes in the visible world; seed changes to plant and flower, and flower to seed. But to Old World thinkers the acorn and the tree are one thing, oak; its visible form changes (or seems to change) but oak does not.[107] Visible forms are illusions, they say; Reality is static, no Creative Energy is operating.[108] (Yet this energy creates new things all the time– apricots, seedless oranges. scentless marigolds. Not long ago in Texas, for no reason that anyone can discover or guess, one single bough on a grapefruit tree created a thing that never existed before: red grapefruit.)

The discovery of Progress is very new; Massachusetts was more than a hundred years old when (in 1735) a European

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[107] Consider this example: "Then We made the sperm into a thing which clings; then of that clinging [organism] We made a (fetus) lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature: so blessed be God the Best to create!" (23:13) After Buccaille (1981) and Abu Shabanah (1993), we have here departed from the Yusuf Ali translation, using the original and plain meaning of *`alaq* as "a thing which clings" (understood as an "organism" by the context) rather than the derived and problematical meaning of "clot."

[108] The Platonic concept that the material world is not "real," affected the worldview both of Europeans (see Ahmad 1992) and those Muslim philosophers who were influenced by European thought. The degree to which this concept infected Muslims' thinking corresponded to the degree to which they departed from the Qur'anic view of God which Mrs. Lane describes here and which Netton (1994) has appropriately called "the Qur'anic Creator paradigm."

suggested the possibility that Progress might exist. Wild young radicals in the Boston taverns argued that Progress is possible; young Benjamin Franklin was one of them, and all respectable Boston frowned upon such dangerous radicalism. That's why Benjamin left home and went to Philadelphia, to begin a career where no one knew that he held such subversive ideas.

So in Europe the Kings and Popes, whose authority was derived from belief that Authority controls a motionless universe, could not admit that this earth spins in space. If this earth does not rest upon something immovable, then there is energy.

The truly great intelligence of medieval Europeans saw at once that Energy operating in the universe may be creative. If there is Creative Energy, if God is creating, then this universe is not finished, changeless, static; and if it is not, then Authority is not its control.

The Europeans' whole world rested upon the pagan belief that Authority controls all things including men. When they heard that this earth spins in space, their whole minds and souls recoiled in horror.[109] That is why they implacably hated the

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[109] The Europeans believed in "the Great Chain of Being" which held that God, beyond the highest sphere of heaven, was insurmountably removed from man, who is confined to the mundane world at the center of the universe. The Qur'anic Creator paradigm holds that God is immanent even as He is transcendent. "It was We who created man and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein" (Qur'an 50:16). *In Signs in the Heavens*, I explain why the concept of the moving earth, a point of indifference to Muslim theology, was so revolutionary for medieval European Christians (Ahmad 1992).

Saracens, whom they saw as anti-Christ, the Devil on earth, rebelling against the Authority of God.

The Kings and the Popes could not look for the East in the West; that would admit that the round earth spins in space;[110] that would admit that the principle of the universe is Energy, and possibly Creativeness, Change, Progress. This is why they forced Galileo to recant his statement that the earth moves.[111] ("But it does move," he muttered, uncontrolled, after he saved himself from burning at the stake[112] by loudly declaring that it does not.)

So no one could come out of Europe to discover America.

It was Columbus, a Genoan sailor who knew Saracens in every port, who sailed west to India so confidently that the King of Portugal could not beat down his terms. All expenses, paid in advance; an Admiral's commission, in advance; vice-regal power over all lands he reached, forever hereditary in his family; and ten percent of all valuable metals ever discovered in those lands, to the end of time; that was what Columbus demanded, and he would not take a penny less.

In Spain, that had been a great center of Saracen civilization for nearly eight hundred years, he found the Christian princes who agreed to those terms. He made the deal with

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[110] Again, this is incorrect. The Kings and Popes knew that the earth was round. See Pacholczyk (1995).

[111] See Ahmad (1992).

[112] Galileo was threatened with torture. He would have remembered the fate of Giordanno Bruno, the Italian student of Muslim science and philosophy who *was* burned at the stake. (*Ibid.*)

Isabella and Ferdinand in the army camp outside Granada, where their troops were besieging the Saracens.

That summer he sailed, and that summer Granada fell.

Granada the beautiful, the great fountain of learning and science and art and commerce that the Saracens had been creating for hundreds of years, was their last stronghold in Spain.

Seven hundred and seventy-five years before, their ancestors had come into Spain. In three years, they held all Spain to the Pyrenees. Only a few Spanish Catholics remained in the mountains, not worth conquering. They harried the border a little, as the wild tribes beyond Khyber Pass annoy British India; border guards attended to them, while in Spain the Catholics, Jews, Greeks, Berbers, Negroes, all the peoples called Saracens, were building Madrid, Seville, Cordova, Granada, Valencia, all the cities, with their libraries, universities, observatories, their schools of architecture and literature, their expanding markets, prospering traders and craftsmen and artists, and all over the fertile south the farmers were developing newer methods of scientific farming that gave the land no rest.

Little by little, as Churchmen grew more powerful in Europe, they gave more help to the Catholics in the Pyrenees.

They fought their way into Spain, as the Crusaders had gone into Palestine. They took Aragon, and Castille. But though they advanced, they could not establish their authority. They were able to take cities and provinces, only on condition that they left them free.

Spanish Catholics who were living in the Saracens' civilization were willing, or more than willing, to welcome Catholic Kings, but they would not give up their Free Cities. From the weak invaders they demanded, and got, Magna Cartas;

signed documents guaranteeing their freedoms.[113]

When Granada fell, the Saracen troops retreated to Africa, and on their heels came Isabella's and Ferdinand's troops, driving out hundreds of thousands of Jews. (800,000, some records say.)[114] There would be no more religious freedom in Spain.

But no Authority controlled the people in Spain, yet. The cities were Free Cities, like those in Italy. And the people had been born and brought up in Saracen civilization; for centuries

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[113] There are many Westerners who believe that the Magna Carta signed by King John is some kind of unprecedented innovation demonstrating a fundamental commitment to rule of law among the Anglo-Saxons that distinguishes them from other people. Holders of that position must confront two historical facts: (1) Such "magna cartas" had already been successfully demanded from the Spanish kings by people who had lived under Islamic law. (2) The British Magna Carta itself was pushed on King John by nobles who had just returned from the Crusades against Salahuddin, who, as a pious Muslim, placed himself under the fixed law of the *sharî`ah*. Salahuddin was admired and even romanticized by the Crusaders. Despite the viciousness of Crusader era propaganda against the Muslims, the legend of Salahuddin's chivalry has echoed through the generations.

[114] The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* gives the number as 170,000 (y Bellido et al. 1980). The persecution of the Jews under the Spanish Inquisition is well-known. One less often hears about the persecution of the Muslims, who were an even larger community, which Mrs. Lane describes below.

their ancestors had lived in that civilization.

The barrier of hatred between Europe and Spain was gone; Spain was now part of Catholic Europe. But the living men and women in Spain were no more European than the French are German today.[115] The Catholic conquest of Spain merely broke down a barrier and let the living human energy of the Saracens' world into European history. Its effects were terrific.

From Spain, energy escaped the Atlantic, in the hundreds and thousands of men and women who sailed with Cortes, Pizarro, Ponce de Leon, Balboa, Magellan, all the explorers and conquistadors who put this hemisphere on the map and led the way around the round earth; and in the thousands who marched with De Soto and Coronado from the Gulf to the Ohio and from the Rio Grande to the peaks of Colorado, and came so near to meeting in Kansas in 1545, only half a century after Columbus saw an island that he thought was India.

Youngsters like Hernando de Soto in his teens, riding away from home alone, on a lean horse, with a sword and a spear and nothing else whatever but his fearless self-reliance; hundreds and thousands of young men like that–they discovered America.

And they came from Spain, only from Spain. Other Europeans did not stir for a hundred years. Three generations of them did not move from where they sat. Not though they knew that the earth is round, and that the fabulously rich half of it waited to be explored. One man comes sailing under an English flag; later, here comes his son, under that flag; and who are they? The Cabots; Italians; two more men like Columbus, from the

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[115] This was written during World War II when the Germans occupied France.

center of the Saracens' Mediterranean.

Columbus might have come and gone and made no more difference than Eric the Red or Alonso Sanchez, if human energy had not leaped from Saracenic Spain, if thousands of men had not taken their lives in their own hands and risked them, on their own responsibility, in the unknown.

(Americans are writing history for American children as if writers still lived on gifts from flattered Royal Highnesses. King Henry the Navigator, who never reefed a sail, discovers a route to India around the tip of Africa. By a clever trick, he gets the Pope to give him the whole unknown half of the earth. But Spaniards are exploring it. The King of Portugal quarrels with the King of Spain about that, so the Pope divides the New World between them. And that piece of parchment causes Spaniards to explore it. Little children of America, learn your history lesson well: How powerful are the Authorities that make this human world. And the carts that pull horses.)

Here are three historic facts, which no one can dispute: two thousand generations[116] of Spaniards had been living in a civilization where every man could act freely. For one century after the fall of Granada, Spaniards were less submissive to Government than any other Europeans. During that century, Spaniards explored and conquered the New World and conquered Europe.

In that century, Spaniards crossed the unknown ocean and

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[116] This should be forty generations. (Eight hundred years allowing 20 years to a generation.) Mrs. Lane's embarrassment at errors like this is understandable, but one wishes she had revised the book rather than withdrawn it.

discovered and seized sixty degrees of latitude and one-sixth of the earth's circumference. They explored and conquered Cuba, the Caribbean islands, Central America, Mexico, Peru, Chili, New Granada, Venezuela, and North America to the Missouri river and the Golden Gate. They took the Philippines. They created the first world-empire, that all but encircled the earth.

In Europe, Spaniards took Portugal and the Low countries and almost the whole of France; the King of France was a prisoner in Madrid. They continued the Crusades against the infidels and took the Balearic islands, Sicily, Sardinia, Naples, and Milan. They took northern Africa. They took the Germanies. In the center of Europe, the King of Spain was Emperor of all these lands. In the west he dominated England, whose Queen was his daughter-in-law; in the east his troops met the Turks at Vienna and flung them back into the Balkans, defeated.

That is the whole record of Catholic Spanish energy.

It lasted one century, three generations. One century later, Spanish energy was not able to get food enough to keep Spaniards alive.

The change in Spain when Granada fell was only a change in meaning. You could not have seen it on the surface of things. The Saracen amirs had known that men are free; the Catholic rulers believed that Authority controls men. But expediency made Isabella and Ferdinand grant certain liberties to their subjects.

A Spanish merchant who had been prospering in Seville, for instance, went right on prospering. All the energy of Saracen civilization that had been creating that civilization was turned, by the lure of unknown lands and the Authority of the new Kings, into conquest and war, but there was all the outfitting of ships and armies; business boomed.

Business men and workers saw nothing changed. The amir had known that every man is self-controlling and responsible for his own affairs. The King granted him permission to manage his affairs. A busy man saw no difference. If anyone pointed out this difference to him, no doubt he replied, "Oh, that's theories. I'm a practical man, I've no time to waste on theories. Everything's all right; the cloth market has never been better than it is right now."

Some two million Muslims remained in Spain. The King's troops made them Catholics.[117] Why should a Catholic object to that? All men should be Catholics; all right-thinking men are Catholics; if any man can't see the truth, he should be made to. The killing and torturing is bad, but it's the only way, and the end justifies the means. The end is good; it is saving their souls. Anyone who protests must want them to be damned.

Tortured, slaughtered, burned alive in their blazing houses or rounded up when they fled, the surviving Muslims did become Catholics. So that was all right.

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[117] After the fall of Grenada, Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, Queen Isabella's confessor embarked upon a mass campaign of forced conversions. When the Muslims rebelled, all were forced to choose between conversion and expulsion. Many of the converts, called Moriscos, were persecuted under suspicion of being secret Muslims (*Ibid.*). Many did secretly retain their Islamic religion. An American Muslim visitor to Spain reported meeting a man whose family had secretly remained Muslim until the present day. A visitor to South America reported that he had seen Arabic inscriptions from the Qur'an on Catholic Churches, obviously put there by Morisco artisans (Syeed 1992).

But, converted, they continued to act like infidels–reading their Arabic books, playing their athletic games, wearing their silk robes, and bathing, always bathing.

Church and State prohibited these heathen customs. Police burned the Arabic libraries, and searched the converts' houses for Arabic books to burn. Reading, writing, or speaking Arabic was strictly forbidden. Police stopped the Muslim games. In every city, town and village the public baths (our "Turkish" baths) were converted to other uses, or razed to the ground. The converts were forbidden to bathe secretly in their homes.

Well, that does not affect the liberty of a Spaniard who does not know Arabic, nor want to play games nor to bathe. Does it?

Still it seemed that the converts–now called Moriscos–did not wholeheartedly accept the Authority that acted only for their own good. They were suspected of bathing in secret. There was a doubt as to what they really thought.

To find out what they thought, the Spanish priests began the Inquisition. The name is accurate; it was an investigation. The Church was responsible for the individual's salvation, and responsibility must be control; no one can be responsible for any thought or word or act that he does not control. To control the beliefs of these Moriscos, it was necessary to know what their beliefs were.

Torture was the only means of finding out. No lie-detector, nor psychological test, existed then. Torture was the only known way of reducing a man's mind to a state in which, presumably, he could not lie. Recently the Russians and the Germans have used torture for this same purpose.

The investigation revealed a heathen taint in the minds of

Spaniards who had never been Muslims. The freedom of thought in Spain was more appalling than anyone had suspected. All the force of The State was barely able to suppress it.[118]

A sincere desire to do good was the whole motive of the Inquisition. A kinder man never lived than Charles the Fifth of Spain, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire that Hitler now wants to resurrect, who ordered his subjects killed by scores of thousands. He was not cruel, and I mean it; he did not want to cause pain, he wanted to prevent it. Obstinate heretics who insisted upon being responsible for their own opinions must be burned alive, but Charles the Fifth ordered that every one of them who repented and submitted to Authority must be killed mercifully. He did not doubt that he was responsible for his subjects' salvation; he had to wipe out those whose minds were corrupted, just as a farmer must kill a tubercular cow, for the health of the others.

At the end of Spain's first century, the chiefs of the Inquisition despaired of rescuing the Moriscos. God only knew what these children and grandchildren of anti-Christ truly believed. And more than a million of them were still in Spain.

Some Churchmen advised the King to deport them. Others urged a massacre; they begged the King to act not only for the good of Spain, but for the whole world's good. To an

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[118] In 1602, among the charges brought up in the Spanish Inquisition against the "Apostacies and Treasons of the Morescoes" was "that they commended nothing so much as that liberty of conscience in all matters of religion, which the Turks, and all other Mohammedans, suffer their subjects to enjoy." (Morgan 1723-1725).

objection that there might be one truly Christian Morisco, they replied that killing him could do no harm, since God knows His own and would take him to Heaven. Deporting these children of the Devil would scatter the infection, not end it.

But they lost the argument. The Moriscos were merely driven from their homes and herded to the seacoast. Starving, dying of thirst, and robbed, beaten, murdered along the way, few of them lived to reach the African deserts. Not one was left alive in Spain.

All Spanish intellectuals burst into one great song of joy and hope. Now Spain was clean. Now every Spaniard was wholly obedient to Church and King. Alone of all European countries, Spain was now one united mass of loyal men, believing and acting as one being. Every thinker and poet in Spain celebrated in book and song this glorious event, this blessed time, the dawn of Spain's Golden Age.

It was the end of Spain.

The loss of a million Moriscos was not so important. Billions had died in Spain during those nine centuries of vigorous human energy. Millions were still living in Spain. But it was true; hardly one was left who knew that men are free.

From three generations of Spaniards, the most self-reliant had gone to the New World and the wars. Now the Moriscos, with their secret thoughts, were gone. Spaniards really were united in one common belief, the belief that Authority controlled them and was responsible for them. And human energy in Spain simply ceased to work.

Losing a million workers caused an economic shock. But the wars caused economic shocks; so did the fall of Granada; driving out hundreds of thousands of Jews had been an economic

shock at the very beginning of this vigorous century. There was still plenty of energy in Spain to till the fields and man the looms and keep trade thriving. But human energy is individual energy, controlled according to individuals' beliefs. Great stretches of the Morisco's fertile land, depopulated then, have never again been plowed. When Spaniards were hungry, they flocked to the cities, to The Church, to the King, who should feed them. As if fishermen should come to the cities, for fish.

Again and again in history, this happens. Always, when people look to Authority for the things that only their own energy can create, they flock to the cities where their energy can produce nothing.[119] During Rome's declining centuries, Romans did this. During the past ten years, a few million Americans have been doing this. During the past twenty years, starving Russian peasants have crowded into the cities–for food.

Thirty years after the last knowledge of freedom was gone from Spain, the Government could not get even a dribble of taxes from provinces that once had filled the Royal treasury to overflowing, and outfitted in addition all the ships and thousands of men who sailed to the New World. In Seville, where two thousand looms had been working, barely three hundred moved. The whole civilized world had been buying Spanish gloves; now Spain produced no gloves.

Travelers report that monasteries were enlarging and multiplying everywhere; property was flowing to The Church; hordes of priests thronged the streets; villages were dwindling,

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[119] Contrary to the common impression that Islam is fatalistic, the Qur'an commands: "... strive together (as in a race) towards all that is good" (Qur'an 2:148).

fields poorly cultivated, the people were hungry. Protestant writers say that The Church was devouring Spain.

But The Church seizes no property. The Church does not entice a single person to leave the fields or the market place. No one is ever compelled to enter a monastery or the priesthood.

There is security in The Church, for mind and soul and body. Spaniards wanted security, the security that children have a right to expect from an Authority they obey.

Madrid's population declined from half a million to 200,000. In the middle of Spain's second century, the 200,000 were starving, and the Governor of Castille with armed troops and executioners was scouring the countryside and seizing food from the peasants, to feed Madrid. Why did he not buy it? He could collect no more taxes.

Tax collectors were tearing down houses and selling the materials for anything they could get, to apply on the owner's taxes. In some towns they demolished more than two-thirds of the houses. And where would they get taxes next year?

Villages were completely deserted. Villagers wandered in bands, looking for food. They died along the roadsides, all over Spain. The King slashed official salaries, even of the highest nobles, even of the Royal household; and slashed them again, two-thirds; and could not pay them. Unpaid soldiers left the frontiers unguarded and ravaged the country, for food.

For almost eight hundred years, human energy in Spain had produced such an abundance of food, comforts and luxuries as the world had never before imagined. After Granada fell, human energy continued to operate in Spain and through Spain upon the New World and Europe, for two more generations. The third generation no longer knew that men are free, and energy

weakened in Spain. The fifth generation could not get support the Government, and their children died of starvation.[120]

In 1699, the British Minister to the Spanish Court could not buy bread in Madrid. Like everyone else, he had to ask the Government for bread. The Corregidor gave him an order for bread, and he was obliged to send men conspicuously armed with "long guns" two leagues from the city to get the bread and bring it back, for only armed men could protect bread in the streets of the capital of Spain.

Twenty thousand starving peasants came into Madrid that day, from the country where the plows were rotting in the weedy fields.

From that time, foreigners ruled the Spanish people. Spain's Prime Ministers were French, Italian, Austrian; Irish soldiers propped up the Spanish monarchy. The ambassadors of Spain were not Spaniards.

When the French were losing the war that Americans know as the French and Indian wars, France slipped Louisiana to Spain–in order not to lose it at the peace conference. And the Lord High Admiral of Spain, who sailed into Lake Pontchartrain to take possession of this continent west of the Mississippi for the Spanish Crown–and who quelled rebellious New Orleans by

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[120] I am not aware that Mrs. Lane was familiar with the work of the fourteenth century historian and economist Ibn Khaldun, but her discussion of the fall of Spain after the *reconquista* follows Ibn Khaldun's (1967) analysis of how dynasties fall. Succeeding generations, spoiled by the economic fruits of a well-founded politico-economic system forget and abandon the principles that made their prosperity possible in the first place.

hanging nineteen leading men from his yardarm–was Admiral O'Reilly from Ireland.

Spain had practically ceased to exist.

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ROSE WILDER LANE

Born in 1886, the daughter of Almanzo and Laura Ingalls Wilder (of "Little House on the Prairie" fame), Rose Wilder Lane was a biographer and bestselling novelist. She encouraged her mother to write the bestselling *Little-House* series about her childhood.

Above all her achievements Lane was a powerful polemicist voicing the call for human liberty. Wide recognition of her talents in this role began with her 1936 *Saturday Evening Post* article "Credo." She also knew something about Islam, having worked for the Red Cross after the First World War, documenting their activities in the Balkans, Russia and the Middle East. Perhaps from that experience she gathered the insights that found their way into her chapter on the role played by Islam in establishing human liberty in her book *The Discovery of Freedom: Man's Struggle Against Authority.* Although Mrs. Lane withdrew publication of *The Discovery of Freedom* because of her dissatisfaction with historical errors in a book which she claims to have written in "a white heat," the annotations and commentary in this present volume demonstrate the truth of Albert Jay Nock's observation: "When it comes to anything fundamental, Mrs. Lane never makes a mistake. She is always right."

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